

# CULTURE: HEART AND SOUL OF DEMOCRACY



60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary  
of the European  
Cultural Convention

The Council of Europe,  
guardian of human rights,  
democracy and the rule of law

Discover what the **Council of Europe**  
does in the areas of education,  
languages, culture, cultural diversity,  
sport, youth and the transmission  
of common values.

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## Learning together

### **Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights**

Because democracy and human rights start with us, the Charter helps us find ways to apply these values and play an effective and positive role in society. All 47 Council of Europe member states have signed the Charter, pledging to combat all forms of violence and discrimination in education, especially bullying.

### **No Hate Speech Movement**

This project helps young people and youth organisations identify and combat racism and discrimination online. The Internet is part of young people's social world and they must be its guardians. The Movement is run in all Council of Europe member states.

### **Pestalozzi Programme**

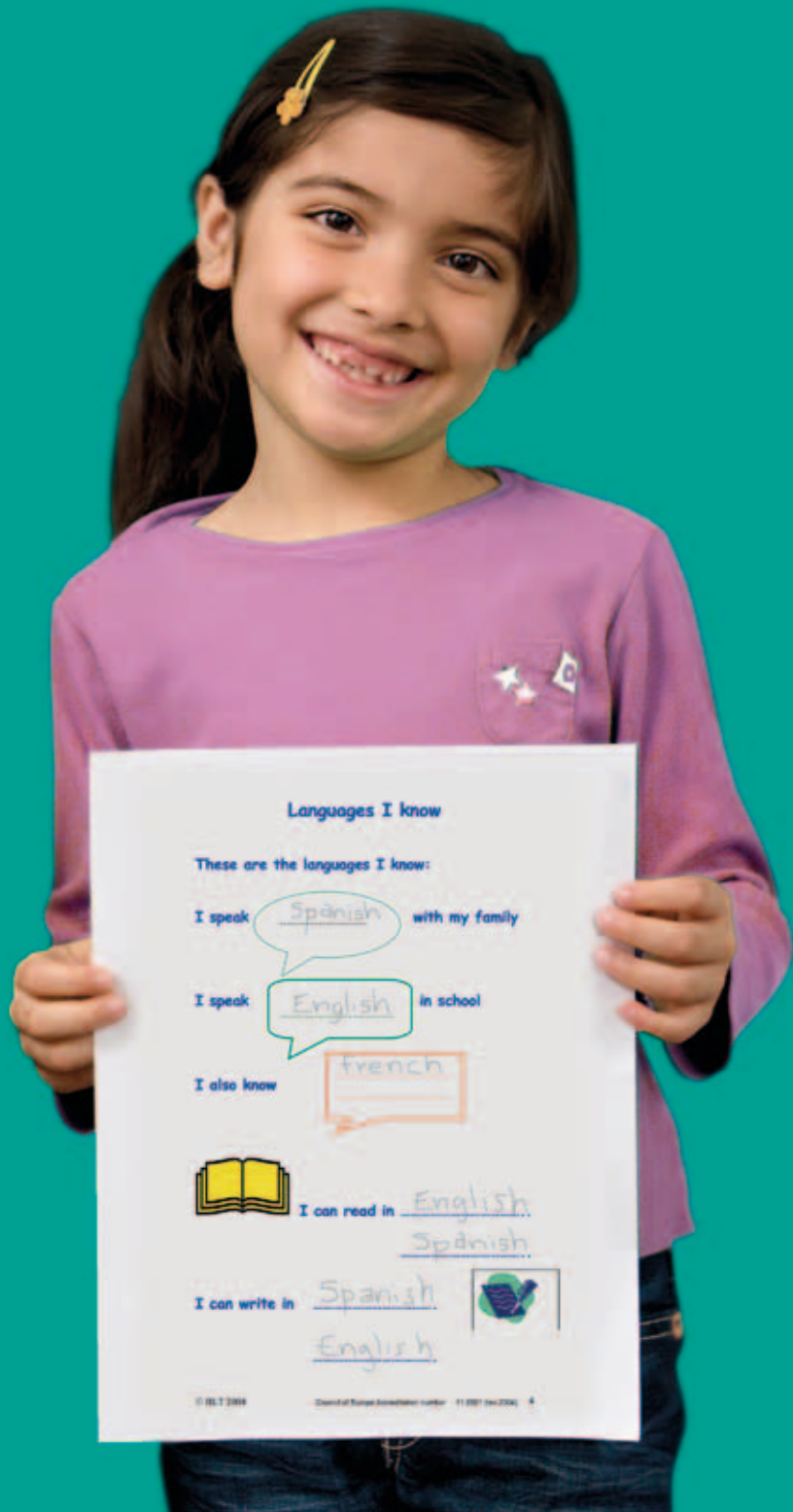
The programme trains 1,000 teachers annually across Europe, provides over 100 online training resources and maintains an online community of practice. Through learner-centred and interactive teaching methods, it transmits the attitudes, skills and knowledge needed in democratic societies. By training educational professionals, it influences learners' everyday experience of education.



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“ I make the Internet better by thinking before I post.”

**Armand Sonez**, Student, Albania



## Communicating with others

### Language Teaching

The Council of Europe develops programmes and tools to improve foreign language teaching. Its achievements include the internationally-recognised “A1-C2” system to describe written and spoken language ability and specific tools for the integration of adult migrants.

### European Centre for Modern Languages in Graz

The Graz Centre, together with a community of experts, develops innovative solutions for language education in schools. It offers international workshops and courses for teacher trainers and education professionals throughout Europe.

### European Day of Languages

Every year, on 26 September, events take place across Europe to promote intercultural understanding and the use of the estimated 225 indigenous languages spoken on our continent.

### European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages

The Charter promotes and protects regional and minority languages traditionally used within a country's territory. It enables speakers to use them in private and public, particularly in education and the media and in communications with administrations and the courts. Compliance with the Charter is monitored by an expert committee.



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“Self-assessment was found to have a strong motivating effect on learners.”

Sergio Garcia, Language Teacher, Spain



## Relating to where we live

### **Intercultural Cities**

This network helps local authorities which have joined it to manage cultural diversity. It encourages mixing and interaction between diverse groups in the public sphere in order to foster cohesion and develops tools to deal with cultural conflict.

### **Landscape Convention**

Urban or rural, the landscape is our living, natural and cultural heritage, be it ordinary or outstanding. The Convention promotes high-quality architectural and urban design and enables citizens and associations to play an active role in the protection and management of their environment. It has been ratified by 38 Council of Europe member states.

### **Democratic Governance**

The Council of Europe helps local and regional authorities become more efficient, accountable and transparent. For example, the programmes run by the Centre of Expertise for Local Government Reform deal with public ethics, leadership development, local finances and inter-municipal co-operation.



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“I really enjoy making new friends who have a very different home life than me.”

**Johan Smitt**, Schoolboy, Germany



## Sharing culture in all its varieties



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### Intercultural Dialogue

Following the adoption of its “White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue” in 2008, the Council of Europe launched several programmes on teacher training, minority protection and social cohesion, including its annual dialogue with religious communities and representatives of non-religious convictions. Its tool “Autobiography of Intercultural Encounters” encourages individuals to learn from personal experiences, whether face-to-face or through visual media.

### Cultural Routes

Since the “Santiago de Compostela Pilgrim Route” was launched in 1987, the Council of Europe has promoted exchange across borders and intercultural dialogue through its 26 Cultural Routes. The thematic routes, which join places and people with diverse cultures and identities, contribute to the sustainable development of lesser-known regions. They include: “the Phoenicians”, “Jewish heritage”, “Ceramics”, “Mozart” and “The Hansa”.

### Art Exhibitions

Art exhibitions were launched in 1954 to rebuild a sense of European cultural identity. They illustrate major movements, figures and events that marked European art history. The 30<sup>th</sup> exhibition – “Desire for Freedom. Art in Europe since 1945” – presents artists exploring freedom, human rights and democracy (Berlin, Milan, Tallinn and Cracow).

“The 30<sup>th</sup> Council of Europe Art Exhibition is very special in the way that it’s like a hit parade.”

**Hilkka Hiip**, Chief Conservator at Kumu, Tallinn, Estonia



## Relating through leisure

### Sport

The Council of Europe promotes diversity in and through sport to enhance social integration, tolerance and understanding. It focuses on: including women, ethnic minorities and people with disabilities and combating homophobia. The Organisation promotes fair play and works towards making the governance of sport more transparent, by tackling doping, spectator violence and match-fixing.

### Eurimages

Eurimages promotes European cinema by supporting the co-production, distribution and exhibition of cinematographic works. Set up in 1988, the Fund has awarded over €474 million to over 1,500 European films. More than 60 films supported by Eurimages have won prestigious awards: Césars, Palmes d'Or, Oscars, Lions d'Or.

### European Heritage Days

Every September, 50 countries take part in European Heritage Days, opening historic buildings normally closed to the public. Cultural events highlight local skills and traditions, architecture and works of art, to unite citizens, regardless of differences in culture and language. The European Union has joined the Council of Europe in celebrating these Days.



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“The Council of Europe has today taken the political lead in the fight against match-fixing. I hope the EU Institutions will follow.”

**Michel Platini**, UEFA President, France



## Building citizenship with young people

### Building Peace

"Youth Peace Ambassadors" organise activities to promote human rights and democracy in communities divided by violence and conflict. Annual "Youth Peace Camps" bring together youth leaders from conflict-stricken regions. For many, this is their first chance to speak to young people from the 'other side'.

### Youth Training Programmes

Some 5,000 youth leaders are trained every year in the Organisation's European Youth Centres in Budapest and Strasbourg. The courses have a wide impact, as youth leaders pass on what they have learnt to members of their associations. Over 15,000 young people benefit from projects supported by the European Youth Foundation, to promote understanding, tolerance and solidarity.

### Youth Participation

The Council of Europe is the only intergovernmental organisation in the world which gives youth organisations an equal say in deciding on youth policies, programmes and priorities alongside government representatives, through its 'co-management' system.



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“This project is a big chance on my way to becoming a youth leader who wants to engage young people in a peaceful dialogue.”

**Seda Gitez**, Youth Peace Ambassador, Spain



## Sharing values through history and heritage



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### **History Teaching**

Projects relate to textbook revision and curricular reform for teaching history in Europe and to the preparation of educational materials for teachers. The aim is to highlight the dangers of focusing only on political events, wars and national history, which often treats other nations as 'the enemy'.

### **Crimes Against Humanity**

The Council of Europe helps new generations understand the past, develop moral conscience and take responsibility as European citizens in order to prevent crimes against humanity. Europe-wide teachers' workshops with survivors of the Holocaust provide material for history, art and music lessons.


### **Heritage Policy**

The Council of Europe works across Europe to help states set up systems to protect, manage and develop their cultural assets. Four major conventions reflect the Council of Europe's principles in this area. They promote democratic participation, respect for diversity and socio-economic development.

“This agreement between the Council of Europe and Yad Vashem denotes willingness to deepen and enhance Holocaust education in Europe.”

**Avner Shalev**, Chairman of Yad Vashem, Jerusalem (2012)





Culture plays a key part in understanding other people and respecting diversity. That is why the Council of Europe in 1954 adopted the European Cultural Convention, which organises co-operation throughout Europe in the areas of culture, education, youth, sport, languages and the transmission of common values.

The aim of this brochure is to give you an insight into what the Council of Europe does in these areas and how it helps to strengthen democracy and human rights across Europe and beyond.

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The Council of Europe is the continent's leading human rights organisation. It includes 47 member states, 28 of which are members of the European Union.

All Council of Europe member states have signed up to the European Convention on Human Rights, a treaty designed to protect human rights, democracy and the rule of law. The European Court of Human Rights oversees the implementation of the Convention in the member states.

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