

## **MALTA CONVENTION**

*Convention for the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage of Europe (revised)*, done at Valletta, on 16 January 1992.

A European legal act open for signature, currently signed by 45 countries, including Poland (ratified by Poland on 13 December 1995). It replaces the European Convention for the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage signed in London on 6 May 1969. It is based on a modern legal interpretation (Trzciński) and is based on the Charter for the Protection and Management of the Archaeological Heritage, i.e. the Lausanne Charter, which governs archaeological practice (in particular excavation issues) and was adopted by ICOMOS in 1990. The main term of the Malta Convention is “archaeological heritage” described in Article 1 as “all remains and objects and any other traces of mankind from past epochs, the preservation and study of which help to retrace the history of mankind and its relation with the natural environment; for which excavations or discoveries and other methods of research into mankind and the related environment are the main sources of information and which are located in any area within the jurisdiction of the Parties”.

The other articles of the Convention are dedicated to the identification of the heritage and measures for protection (Articles 2 to 4), integrated conservation of archaeological heritage (Article 5), financing of archaeological research and conservation (Article 6), collection and dissemination of scientific information (Articles 7 to 8), promotion of public awareness (Article 9), prevention of illicit circulation of elements of the archaeological heritage (Articles 10 to 11), mutual technical and scientific assistance (Article 12), control of the application of the Convention (Article 13) and final clauses (Articles 14 to 18). The Malta Convention is written in the spirit of sustainable development, promotes a participatory model in the protection and care of the archaeological heritage, and emphasises the importance of education and dissemination of archaeology. Archaeological sites are defined in it as a non-renewable resource (Gutowska, Kobyliński), subject to special protection.

The tools developed in order to protect the heritage are, among others: emphasis on conducting rescue research; standardisation of the practice of archaeological research on investment projects; introduction of commercial and contractual archaeology in order to save as many archaeological sites as possible; dissemination of knowledge about archaeology.

[M. St.]

### **Literature:**

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