# AN CHiSE

Applying New Solutions for Cultural Heritage protection by Innovative, Scientific, social and economic Engagement

# Training Programme models

## Archaeology

*Archaeology and the fight against illicit trafficking of cultural goods*

# Summary

# 1 Module identification and context

- **Module name:** Archaeology and the fight against illicit trafficking of cultural goods

- **Target community:** Archaeology

- **Responsible partner:** ULL2

## 1.1 Specific justification

Particular challenges:

- Archaeological sites are primary "source zones" for looted objects that later circulate on the art market, often without documentation. Field archaeologists are usually the first to detect looting but are rarely trained in how to document and report it in a way that is useful to law enforcement agencies or custom authorities. [1][2]
- Many offences are "silent": small-scale clandestine excavations, unreported metal detecting and online sales of artefacts that collectively cause huge damage but are hard to monitor. Archaeologists often lack skills in monitoring online platforms and using existing tools such as ICOM Red Lists and international databases. [3]
- Complex and evolving legal frameworks (UNESCO 1970 Convention, UNIDROIT, EU regulations on import and export of cultural goods, national laws) are not always integrated into archaeological curricula, so professionals may not recognize when a situation has legal implications beyond heritage management. [4][5]

Current training gaps:

- Existing training and tool-kits focus strongly on customs, police, judiciary and museum staff (UNESCO / EU judiciary training[6], WCO PITCH[7], ICCROM resources[8]), with less content tailored specifically to archaeologists' responsibilities on excavation, archaeological survey and site management.
- Archaeology degree programmes seldom include practical modules on art-market mechanisms, due diligence or how looted material moves from soil to sale. Likewise, there is limited use of scenario-based exercises that simulate real trafficking cases, although such approaches are emerging in OSCE[9] and EU trainings.[10]

There is a lack of structured, cross-sector learning where archaeologists work alongside customs, police and museum professionals on joint cases, even though many international programmes[11][12][13] highlight this as essential for effective response.

- Clear understanding of national and EU legal frameworks on cultural goods and how they interact with international conventions;
- Practical skills for understanding, documenting and reporting looting, suspicious finds and site damage so that information is usable in investigations and prosecutions;
- Capacity to use digital tools: inventories, GIS, photographic protocols, open-source intelligence (OSINT), art-market databases and ICOM / INTERPOL resources;
- Communication skills to liaise with local communities, collectors, dealers and law enforcement agencies, including risk communication and ethical guidance;
- Methods for integrating prevention and preparedness into archaeological projects, including risk assessment and site protection planning.

### Added value:

- Positioning archaeologists at the centre of anti-trafficking efforts, instead of as peripheral stakeholders / actors;
- Combining legal, ethical, technical and practical components into useable "toolkits" for fieldwork, collections work and academic practice;
- Introducing innovative teaching approaches that go beyond classic lectures: cross-sector scenario labs, digital investigation exercises and hybrid online components inspired by UNESCO MOOCs and recent EU training innovations;
- Aligning curriculum with EU Action Plan against trafficking in cultural goods, ensuring that archaeology training is consistent with current European policies and standards.

## 1.2 Target audience definition

### Student prerequisites:

- Bachelor level in archaeology or related field (heritage studies, art history, conservation) or equivalent.
- Basic understanding of archaeological methods (excavation, survey, documentation).
- For semester format: at least second-year BA or MA level in a heritage-related discipline.

### Professional prerequisites:

- Professionals working as archaeologists, excavation directors, site managers, heritage officers, museum archaeologists or contract archaeologists.
- Minimum 2 years of professional experience in archaeology or related heritage management.
- Institutional context: public heritage services, archaeological missions, museums, universities, private archaeology firms, NGOs and international organizations.

### Recommended group size:

- One-day format: 20–30 participants (students) and 15–20 (professionals).
- One-week format: 20–25 mixed participants per group.
- Semester format: up to 30 students, with smaller groups (4–6) for project work.

# 2 Format and audience breakdown

- **Students/Academics**

- **Professionals**

*Students/Academics:*

Learning objectives:

- Describe the main actors and routes in the illicit trafficking of archaeological objects.
- Identify basic legal frameworks relevant to illicit trafficking of cultural goods at national, EU and international level.
- Recognize indicators of looting and suspicious artefacts in field and collections contexts.
- Propose simple preventive measures and reporting procedures within an archaeological project.

Content structure:

- Session 1 (1.5h): The trafficking chain from site to market (possible link with the art market Module)
- How looted artefacts move from excavation to sale.
- Key actors: looters, intermediaries, dealers, collectors.
- Role of archaeologists as early detectors.

- Session 2 (1.5h): Legal and policy frameworks for archaeologists
- Overview of UNESCO 1970, UNIDROIT, EU regulations and national laws relevant to archaeology.
- Reporting obligations and institutional responsibilities.
- Case study: a looted object repatriation case involving archaeological material and archaeological investigation

- Session 3 (1.5h): Recognizing and documenting looting
- Indicators on site and in survey data (aerial photography).
- Quick documentation protocols (photos, forms).
- Group exercise: students analyse photos / satellite images of sites showing different types of damage traces.
- Recognizing the type of looting, systematic vs opportunistic

- Session 4 (1.5h): Real-cases and ethical issues
- Real-case scenarios: student as archaeologist confronted with sites looting traces, suspicious finds, requests from collectors or pressure to ignore looting.
- Discussion on ethics, professional codes and collaboration with law enforcement agencies and local communities.

**Teaching methods:**
- Short interactive lectures.
- Guided case study discussions.
- Visual analysis of real examples (photos, maps, web listings)

**Required materials:**
- Laptop, projector, whiteboard or flipchart.
- Printed handouts on legal frameworks.
- Case study dossiers (photos of sites, auction listings, Red list entries).

**Assessment method:**
- MCQ (QCM) (online or paper) at the end of the day.
- Group debrief.

**Expected outcomes:**
- To explain why archaeologists are key to prevention and early detection.
- To identify when and how to report suspected illicit trafficking.
- To apply basic documentation methods for looting incidents.

*Professionals:*

**Learning objectives:**

- Map their institution's exposure to illicit trafficking risks in archaeological work.
- Apply appropriate documentation and reporting procedures when faced with suspected looting or illicit objects.
- Use at least two digital tools (databases, ICOM Red lists, OSINT) to support due diligence.
- Design a simple internal protocol or checklist to reduce trafficking risks in their projects or institutions.

**Content structure:**

- Session 1 (1.5h): Threat assessment for archaeological projects

- Risk factors: conflict, development projects, detectorist activity, geographical isolation, tourism, market demand.
- Short exercise: participants map risks for their own sites or collections.

- Session 2 (1.5h): Practical use of legal and policy tools

- Operational implications of EU action plan and national regulations in day-to-day archaeology.

ow to collaborate with customs, police, prosecutors and museums. (possible link with MUS module)
- Exercise: drafting a report of evidence.

- Session 3 (1.5h): Digital investigation lab

- Hands-on demonstration of ANCHISE toolkit (ICONEM), ICOM Red Lists, INTERPOL and other key databases and guidance.
- OSINT basics: checking online auctions, social media, collector forums.

- Session 4 (1.5h): Designing a practical protocol
- Participants work in small teams to create a draft anti-looting protocol or checklist for their site / organisation / project.
- Plenary sharing and peer feedback.

## Teaching methods:

- Peer exchange based on participants' own cases.
- Scenario-based exercises.
- Live demonstrations and guided practice in digital tools.
- Co-design workshop for protocols.

## Required materials:

- Computer room or laptops/ tablets with internet access.
- Access to online resources / databases.

## Assessment method:

- Evaluation of group protocol drafts (clarity, feasibility, alignment with legal frameworks).
- Individual self-assessment checklist of competencies at end of session.

## Certification/recognition:

- Certificate of completion.

## 2.2 One-week format (30 hours)

*Students/Academics:*

## Learning objectives:

- Explain in depth the mechanisms and actors involved in illicit trafficking of cultural goods with a focus on archaeological material.
- Analyse real case situations and identify legal, ethical and professional responsibilities of archaeologists.
- Plan preventive measures and post-incident response for an archaeological site or project.
- Work effectively in interdisciplinary teams with students from law, criminology or conservation (where possible).
- Produce a short project (e.g. site protection and awareness plan) linked to a real or hypothetical archaeological context.

## Daily programme structure:

- **Day 1:** Understanding the phenomenon
- Lectures on history and scale of illicit trafficking, with focus on archaeological objects.
- Mapping global and regional routes.
- Group work: reconstruct the route of a looted object from site to market.
- **Day 2:** Law, policy and ethics
- In-depth review of relevant conventions, EU regulations and national laws. (possible link with MUS module)
- Ethics in research, publication and acquisition.

- **Day 3:** Field and collections perspectives
- Methods for detecting and documenting looting in excavation, survey and storage contexts.
- Introduction to risk assessment and emergency preparedness for sites.
- Practical: students work with maps, aerial images and documentation templates.
- **Day 4:** Digital tools and investigation
- Introduction to investigations: evidence chain, roles of law enforcement and customs. (possible link with LEA module)
- Computer lab: using databases, ICOM Red lists and OSINT to assess suspicious artefacts or online offers.
- Mini "digital challenge": groups compete to identify red flags in simulated online cases.
- **Day 5:** Project lab and presentations
- Students finalize group projects (e.g. protection and awareness plan for a site, educational campaign).
- Presentations to a panel (instructor and external professional if possible).
- Reflection session on personal and professional responsibilities.

**Theory-practice balance:**

- Approximately 40 % theory, 60 % practice (case work, labs, simulations, project work).

**Individual/group work:**

- Individual: short reading assignments, reflection notes.
- Group: project development over the week, daily collaborative exercises and scenario work.

**Assessment components:**

- Continuous assessment:
- Participation in discussions and exercises.
- Short quizzes (law, concepts).
- Quality of contributions to group work.
  - Final evaluation: Group project (written plan and oral presentation) assessed on relevance, feasibility and integration of legal, technical and ethical elements.
  - Participation: Attendance, engagement and peer feedback quality.

**Required deliverables:**

- Group project report (8–10 pages) with an annexed practical tool (protocol, checklist, communication material, risk map).
- Individual one-page reflection on the role of archaeologists in fighting trafficking.

*Professionals:*

## Learning objectives:

- Conduct a structured trafficking risk assessment for their sites, projects or institutions.
- Develop and implement preventive and response protocols tailored to their context.
- Collaborate effectively with law enforcement agencies, customs, judiciary and museums in cases involving archaeological material.
- Design internal awareness and training initiatives for their teams or institutions.

## Modular programme structure:

- Module 1: Strategic framework and risk landscape

- EU policies, international frameworks, national context, threat trends. (possible link with MUS module)

- Module 2: Operational responses in archaeology

- Standard operating procedures for excavations, surveys, storage and reporting. Integrating anti-trafficking into contracts and project design.

- Module 3: Cross-sector case labs

- Real or anonymised cases analysed in multidisciplinary teams (archaeologists, museum staff, LEAs where possible).

- Module 4: Digital investigation and intelligence

- Practical OSINT methods, database use, evidence preservation.

- Module 5: Communication, advocacy and training others

- Designing internal training, public awareness tools and stakeholder engagement strategies.

## Professional case studies: 4–6 detailed cases involving:

- Looting around development projects.
- Cross-border sale of archaeological items.
- Community engagement successes or failures.
- Return and restitution cases.

## Peer learning components:

- Daily "experience circles" where participants present their own cases or challenges.
- Structured peer feedback on draft protocols and action plans.

## Assessment for professionals:

- Practical evaluation:

- Performance in scenario exercises and case labs.

- Quality and realism of a draft institutional or project action plan.

- Professional portfolio:

- Compilation of tools produced during the week (risk map, protocol, communication plan).

- Peer feedback:

- Participants review each other's action plans using a simple framework.

## Follow-up mechanisms:

- Optional online follow-up webinar after 3–6 months.
- Sharing of updated protocols and lessons learned with the cohort and project partners.

**2.3 Semester format (60 hours distributed)**

*Students only:*

Integration objectives:

Position this module as a core or elective unit within archaeology, heritage studies or museum studies programmes.
Provide students with a complete, practice-oriented understanding of trafficking issues linked to archaeology that complements theory-focused courses.
Weekly structure: 12 weeks, 5 hours per week:
2 hours lecture / seminar
2 hours practical workshop or lab
1 hour supervised project or tutorial.

Session breakdown:

- Introduction to trafficking and its impact on archaeology
- Historical evolution of collecting and looting
- International conventions and EU framework (possible link with MUS module)
- National legal frameworks and institutional roles
- Archaeological fieldwork and looting detection
- Collections, documentation and due diligence (possible link with MUS module)
- Digital tools, databases and OSINT
- Cross-sector cooperation and case studies
- Ethics in publication, research and the market (possible link with art market module)
- Community engagement and awareness
- Student project lab 1: design and peer review
- Student project lab 2: presentations and reflection

Prerequisite courses:

- Introductory archaeology modules
- Basic heritage law or heritage management (recommended but not strictly mandatory).

Connection to main curriculum:

- Links to modules on heritage management, field methods, museum studies and ethics.
- Supports employability in heritage institutions that increasingly require knowledge of trafficking and security.

## Independent study component:

- Guided readings (legal texts, case reports, toolkits).
- Viewing of selected online existing training modules or MOOCs (e.g. UNESCO or EU-funded courses) and short reflection tasks.
- Preparation of project work.

## Supervised project:

- Semester-long project in small groups on one of the following:
- Risk and protection plan for a specific site or region.
- Educational / awareness campaign concept for a local community.
- Internal protocol for a hypothetical excavation .

## University-level assessment:

- Coursework:
- Short essays or policy briefs (e.g. analysis of a case, comparison of legal frameworks).
- Project evaluation:
- Group project graded on research quality, practical relevance, clarity and creativity.
- Final examination:
- Written exam combining short questions and case-based problem solving.
- ECTS/credit allocation:
- 60 hours contact + 60–90 hours independent work.
- Recommended allocation: 6–8 ECTS, justified by workload and complexity.

# 3 Practical implementation

## Required expertise:

- Academic background in archaeology or heritage studies with strong knowledge of illicit trafficking issues.
- Experience in field archaeology and/or heritage management.
- Familiarity with international and EU legal frameworks (UNESCO, EU regulations, national heritage laws).

## Training for instructors:

- Short "train-the-trainer" session on pedagogical methods (scenario design, OSINT teaching).
- Briefing on tools and resources (UNESCO toolkit, ICOM Observatory materials, WCO PITCH handbook).

## Guest speakers:

- Law enforcement or customs officers specialised in cultural goods.
- Museum professionals responsible for acquisitions and provenance research.
- Legal experts (heritage law, criminal law).
- Representatives from international organisations or EU projects working on trafficking.

## Instructor-participant ratio:

- One main instructor per 20–25 students.

## 3.2 Logistical requirements

### Physical space:

- Flexibly arranged classroom that supports group work and simulations.
- Access to computer lab or Wi-Fi for digital sessions.

### Technical requirements:

- Stable internet connection.
- Computers or laptops for participants during OSINT and database labs.
- Access to videoconferencing.

### Documentation:

- Handouts summarising key legal instruments, reporting templates and checklists.
- Case study packs and multimedia materials (photos, videos, maps, reports).

### Budget considerations:

- Staff time for preparation and teaching.
- Travel and fees for guest speakers.
- Licences or subscriptions to specialised tools if needed.
- Possible small budget for simulation materials.

## 3.3 Quality assurance

### Module evaluation by participants:

- Anonymous surveys at the end of each format (one day / week / semester).
- Short "exit interviews" or focus groups where feasible.

### Learning outcome measurement:

- Pre- and post-training self-assessment of knowledge and skills.
- Comparison of quiz scores before and after key sessions.

Continuous improvement process:
- Annual review of content to reflect new EU policies, case law and tools.
- Incorporation of participant feedback and external expert advice.

### External validation:

- Alignment with international training standards (UNESCO, ICCROM, EU) and external review where possible.

# 4 Contextual adaptations

## Legislative differences:

- Each implementation should integrate national heritage laws, export controls and criminal provisions, including specific rules on metal detecting, reporting of finds and sanctions.
- Local examples and cases should be used to make legal content concrete.

## Institutional variations:

- Adapt to whether archaeology is mainly carried out by public service, universities or private firms.
- Adjust collaboration examples to the actual roles of police, customs, judiciary and culture ministries in each country.

## Cultural considerations:

- Sensitivity to community relationships to heritage, contested histories and religious or custom practices.
- Inclusion of local voices and perspectives in case discussions.

## Language adaptations:

- Translation of core materials into national languages.
- Glossaries for technical and legal vocabulary.

## 4.2 International standardization

### Core universal elements:

- The trafficking chain and its impact on archaeology.
- Key international conventions and basic EU framework.
- Role of archaeologists in raising awareness locally, prevention, detection and collaboration.

### European best practices:

- Reference to EU Action Plan against trafficking in cultural goods and related initiatives.
- Use of shared tools such as ICOM Red Lists and international databases.

### International cooperation aspects:

- Emphasis on cross-border information sharing and joint investigations.
- Understanding roles of UNESCO, INTERPOL, WCO, OSCE and others.

### Transferability guidelines:

- Keep the structure of learning objectives, core concepts and methods.
- Swap in national legal content and case studies while preserving central anti-trafficking principles.
- Inclusion of local voices and perspectives in case discussions.
- Language adaptations:
- Translation of core materials into national languages.
- Glossaries for technical and legal vocabulary.

## 4.3 Cross-disciplinary adaptation and transferability

### Target disciplines for adaptation:

- Museum studies and collections management.
- Art history and art market studies.
- Conservation and heritage management.

### Key modifications required:

- For museum studies: stronger focus on acquisition policies, provenance research and inventorying.
- For art history / market: emphasis on due diligence and market ethics.
- For conservation: integrating security and documentation practices into conservation work flows.

Universal transferable elements:

- Case-based learning around trafficking incidents.
- Digital investigation labs.
- Ethics and codes of conduct.

Interdisciplinary collaboration opportunities:

- Joint simulations involving archaeology, law, criminology and museum studies students.
- Co-taught modules between archaeology departments and law faculties.

Customization guidelines:

- Maintain clear learning outcomes tied to trafficking prevention and response.
- Ensure all adaptations remain aligned with international and EU frameworks.

Resource sharing potential:

- Shared repositories of case studies, scenarios, reports and digital toolkits accessible across departments and institutions.

## 4.4 Hybrid adaptations

Online / hybrid format feasibility:
- Highly suitable for:
- Legal and policy content
- Introductory lectures
- Many cases discussions
- In-person preferred for:
- Field-based components (site visits, looting indicators on the ground)
- Complex simulations and role-plays when physical presence increases realism.

Technology and platform requirements:
- Videoconferencing platform with breakout rooms, screen sharing and recording.
- Learning Management System for readings, quizzes and assignments (Moodle).
- Collaborative platforms for shared documents and whiteboards.

Pedagogical adaptations:
- Use micro-learning units (short videos, quizzes) to keep online engagement high.
- Break long lectures into shorter segments separated by interactive polls or discussions.
- Adapt simulations into online role-plays, with clear scripts and moderation.
- Use digital portfolios in which students or professionals upload their protocols, plans and reflections.

## REFERENCES

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Discover more about the ANCHISE project on our website: https://www.anchise.eu/