

LIVE ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE 7 MOST ENDANGERED HERITAGE SITES IN EUROPE 2022

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Address by Prof. Dr. Hermann Parzinger
Executive President of Europa Nostra

Dear colleagues and friends

Madame Commissioner

Dear Heritage Enthusiasts from all across Europe

- On behalf of Europa Nostra, I **thank you for joining us today** for the Public Announcement of the much-awaited List of 7 Most Endangered sites in Europe for 2022.
- Alas, this year's announcement takes place during a **most alarming and deeply disturbing geopolitical context**. Never would we have imagined that in 2022 the cultural heritage of an entire European country would be endangered at once.
- While we firmly condemn the brutal invasion of Ukraine by the Russian army, and mourn the immeasurable human suffering, we are also deeply **worried by the direct threat to Ukraine's invaluable cultural and natural heritage**, which forms part of Europe's shared heritage.
- Many heritage sites have already suffered severe damage and so many more heritage sites all over Ukraine are under daily imminent threat of destruction. On 25 February, just after the beginning of the conflict, we issued a [Statement in solidarity with Ukraine](#), to raise our voice in this

critical situation. This was supported also by the Board of Europa Nostra that decided unanimously to **declare the cultural heritage of Ukraine as “THE most Endangered heritage in Europe”**.

In this worrying situation, Europa Nostra has joined forces, voices and resources with the European and International community, to deploy a fully fledged dedicated response to the Ukrainian crisis. Our mobilisation, includes, among other actions:

- **Liaising with key global heritage actors** including UNESCO, ICOMOS, ICOM, ICCROM, the Blue Shields, as well as with the civil society network Our World Heritage to coordinate concrete steps of our joint action for the Ukrainian heritage community.
- We are liaising especially closely with **ALIPH, the International Alliance for the Protection of Heritage in Conflict Areas** within the scope of our [Memorandum of Understanding](#) which was signed on 31 January this year. Together, we are actively working to ensure that Ukraine's cultural heritage will not be erased and Ukraine's history will not be rewritten.
- In the year when we mark the 50th anniversary of the World Heritage Convention, Europa Nostra has also addressed a [letter to the members of the UNESCO World Heritage Committee](#) conveying our strong view that, due to Russia's invasion of Ukraine, the Russian Federation has lost its legitimacy and credibility to act as the chair of the 45th session of this Committee and to host this Committee in Kazan.
- We have also reached out to the European Union urging its Institutions and Member States to include emergency support for the endangered heritage in Ukraine within their comprehensive package of emergency help to this country, as well as to include cultural heritage among the areas covered by any future plans and funds for the post-war reconstruction.
- Last but not least, we have teamed up with the **Global Heritage Fund** to launch a [joint crowdfunding campaign to directly support the defenders of Ukraine's endangered heritage](#). All donations will directly and immediately support these brave guardians of our shared history and humanity. In just ten days, Europa Nostra has already raised around 11.000 euros from 18 countries, together with additional amounts raised by the Global Heritage Fund, and we are ready to continue to promote the initiative to raise even more! We invite you to donate (*the link will be provided in the chat*) as together, we can make a difference.

- And we are committed to align other actions, including the 7 Most Endangered to support, in every possible way, our fellow Europeans in Ukraine. We also **express solidarity with the nominators of the two sites shortlisted for the 7 Most Endangered Programme from Ukraine**. They are now part of a wider picture, where sadly many more heritage sites and even entire cities in the country are under imminent threat and subject to different priorities compared to a few months ago.
- In times of crises, **programmes such as the 7 Most Endangered are all the more important, relevant and timely**. Through the 7 Most Endangered programme, currently at its 7th edition, **we wish to raise awareness about the fragile conditions of irreplaceable cultural heritage sites**. In the past 9 years, the programme has successfully acted as a catalyst to bring positive change, hope and joint action for a brighter and more sustainable future of Europe's most vulnerable heritage gems.
- Let me give you some numbers:
 - With today's announcement, we have now reached a total of **51 threatened monuments and heritage sites from 28 countries** across Europe that have been **selected for the 7 Most Endangered**.
 - Additionally, **38 sites benefitted from our programme as shortlisted sites**, and some of them have also been resubmitted and then selected for the final list in these almost ten years of activity.

In the meantime, **many sites have been saved** thanks to the joint mobilisation of different local and European partners.

- **But we couldn't do that alone. To achieve all this, we needed strong partners**. We are most thankful and proud of the long-standing and invaluable **partnership with the European Investment Bank Institute**, represented today by **Henry von Blumenthal**, acting Dean of the European Investment Bank Institute. We would also like to take this opportunity to **thank Commissioner Gabriel - who has conveyed a strong opening message to this online event - and the European Commission as a whole** that is supporting the programme thanks to the Network Project of the Creative Europe Programme. **If the 7 Most Endangered Programme is like that today, it is thanks to our valuable partners!**

- We wish to commend, in particular, the determined commitment by the European Investment Bank to save **Europe’s endangered cultural heritage, and to invest in and fully capitalise on our shared heritage as a driver of sustainable development and of peaceful coexistence.**
- A clear proof of this commitment is their decision to double the support for our 7 Most Endangered programme as of 2020, allowing us to run it on a yearly basis. Thanks to this increase, eligible selected sites can now be awarded an **EIB Heritage Grant of 10,000 Euros**, as **seed money to help their efforts** to save the endangered sites for present and future generations. Europa Nostra is committed to support the sites to maximise the use and impact of these grants, and to build the capacities of local sites’ owners and managers to use these to attract other grants from different sources, including EU funds. Ultimately, the Programme shall support the selected sites in becoming self-sustaining and sustainable in the long-run.
- The EIBI also provides their extensive expertise. Through the 7ME programme, Europa Nostra and the EIB Institute have effectively mobilised multidisciplinary teams of heritage experts to **undertake missions and assessment** for the selected endangered sites and **formulate recommendations and feasible action plans** for each of them. This year, despite the limitations due to the Covid-19 Pandemic, the teams managed to continue their onsite assessment, and some physical missions successfully took place.
- But our fruitful partnership goes well beyond the 7 Most Endangered scheme. Facing the alarming **climate crisis**, we have joined forces with the EIB, together with ICOMOS and the Climate Heritage Network to produce, in 2020, the **European Cultural Heritage Green Paper “Putting Europe’s shared heritage at the heart of the European Green Deal”**.
- The Paper correlates the contribution of cultural heritage to all key areas of the **European Green Deal**. It proposes a series of concrete recommendations both for policy-makers and for cultural heritage stakeholders, and identifies Potential conflicts, real or perceived, between heritage safeguarding and European Green Deal action while providing win-win strategies for overcoming these conflicts.
- **Tackling climate change is this generation’s defining task. It is a growing threat to Europe’s cultural heritage**, be it tangible, intangible and natural.

Let us think about the **Giusti Garden**, a beautiful historical garden in Italy, selected for the 7 Most Endangered Programme in 2021, **heavily affected in 2020 by severe thunderstorms which caused extensive damage to the entire site**. Or one of the shortlisted sites for this 2022 edition, the **Historic Centre of Stolberg, unexpectedly turned into a flood zone** by the power of the nearby river, and where hundreds of buildings were severely damaged.

- **But we are also convinced that cultural heritage is part of the solution!** This is why Europa Nostra is ever more active in culture and heritage - based climate action and we have turned this among our key policy priorities. Among others, we have:
 - Actively contributed to increase the visibility of the cultural and heritage world at the **26th UN Climate Change Conference of the Parties (COP 26)**, and we are determined to achieve tangible results in the COP27, and in the next COPs to come.
 - Last year, Europa Nostra became regional co-Chair of the Climate Heritage Network (**CHN**) for **Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States**. In this role, we are actively mobilising and federating artistic, cultural, heritage and creative actors in the region for transformative climate action.
 - We are also an Official partner of the **New European Bauhaus** - we have set up a New European Bauhaus Europa Nostra Taskforce, we are active members of the NEB Collective and we are currently preparing to actively contribute to the NEB Festival in Brussels in June, among others.
- As you can see, Europa Nostra is fully determined to **continue boosting our efforts to save endangered heritage in Europe and beyond – whether at risk from man-made or natural hazards**. To deliver on this ambition, we shall continue federating the many heritage actors in Europe and the world, and building bridges between them, and across sectors, generations, countries and policy realms.
- Now the time has arrived, and what better way to conclude my address than with the launch of the video that will announce **the much awaited 7 Most Endangered Sites in Europe for 2022**.

Thank you for your attention!