



STATEMENT

Europa Nostra strongly supports the establishment of the Ukraine Heritage Fund in response to the ongoing destruction of cultural heritage in Ukraine

Following its Council meeting held on 9-10 June 2025 in Malta, and on the eve of the expert meeting to be held on 20 June 2025 in Florence, [Europa Nostra](#) wishes to express its strong support for the establishment of the Ukraine Heritage Fund in response to the ongoing destruction of cultural heritage in Ukraine.

In this context, Europa Nostra, the European voice of civil society committed to cultural and natural heritage, expresses its deep concern and unequivocal condemnation following the recent targeted attack on one of Ukraine's most significant and sacred historic monuments – the National Conservation Area “Saint Sophia of Kyiv”, which includes the UNESCO World Heritage listed Saint Sophia Cathedral and the nearby St. Andrew's Church, recipient of a [European Heritage Award / Europa Nostra Award 2022](#), and which is an [Associate Member of Europa Nostra](#).

The Saint Sophia Cathedral, an 11th-century architectural and spiritual landmark, symbolises the deep cultural roots of Ukraine within Europe. According to the Ministry of Culture and Strategic Communications of Ukraine, on 9 June 2025, the site sustained serious damage from a Russian drone strike, with the cornice of the cathedral's main apse severely affected. This deliberate attack on cultural heritage constitutes yet another act of grave violation of international humanitarian law, in particular [1954 Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict](#), to which the Russian Federation is a State Party.

This most recent example of Russia's ongoing attack on cultural heritage in Ukraine recalls the memory of, among others, the destruction of historic buildings in Odesa in 2023, since then declared World Heritage Site in Danger. This adds to a tragic pattern of deliberate damage to culture and cultural heritage in Ukraine, at a scale which is unprecedented in Europe since the Second World War.

Europa Nostra continues to stand in full solidarity with the people of Ukraine, with its cultural professionals and institutions, and with the Minister of Culture and his colleagues in Kyiv. We reiterate our commitment to the protection of cultural heritage in conflict zones and to the defence of international legal norms – including the 1954 Hague Convention and its Protocols, the 1972 UNESCO World Heritage Convention, and the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage.

We deplore the fact that since February 2022, when Russia launched its illegal, unprovoked, and unjustified full-scale invasion of Ukraine, over 2,200 cultural infrastructure facilities and more than 1,400 officially recognised heritage sites – including churches, monuments, and public artworks – have been damaged or destroyed. The estimated monetary value of the loss to Ukraine's cultural sector now exceeds €27 billion.

The European Voice of
Civil Society committed
to Cultural Heritage

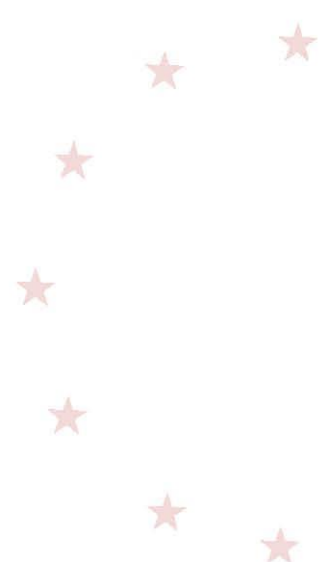
www.europanostra.org

International Secretariat
Secrétariat international
Lange Voorhout 15
NL - 2514 EA Den Haag
T +31 70 302 40 50
E info@europanostra.org

Brussels Office
Bureau de Bruxelles
Rue de l'Industrie 10
B - 1000 Bruxelles
T +32 2 894 74 99
E bxl@europanostra.org

ING Bank (NL) N° 63 18 630
IBAN: NL63INGB0006318630
BIC: INGBNL2A

KvK (NL) N° 27281560



These systematic attacks aim to annihilate the cultural fabric of a sovereign European country.

Despite this, Ukraine, its citizens and its cultural community have demonstrated extraordinary resilience and determination. Over 540,000 museum items have been relocated to safer areas. Yet more than 3 million heritage objects remain exposed to risk; many located in or near conflict zones. These heritage sites and objects are not only of national importance for Ukraine – they are part of Europe’s shared cultural legacy and therefore deserve urgent and sustained support from the European Union and other European and international partners of Ukraine.

During the Europa Nostra Council meeting in Malta, with the participation of **Natalia Moussienko**, our Vice-President who travelled to Malta from Kyiv, we were pleased to pass these strong messages to **Glenn Micallef**, European Commissioner responsible for Intergenerational Fairness, Youth, Culture and Sport, with whom we had an excellent exchange of views on the upcoming Culture Compass currently under preparation by the European Commission. On this occasion, European Commissioner Micallef reiterated the European Union’s unwavering support to the recovery of Ukraine, including the commitment of the European Commission to help the recovery of the rich cultural heritage in Ukraine.

In the light of the above, Europa Nostra welcomes the results of the first international ministerial conference on culture held in Uzhhorod on 1 February 2025, which was convened by the Ministry of Culture and Strategic Communications of Ukraine, with support from 28 partner countries, the European Commission, and UNESCO, and led to the adoption of the [Declaration on Strengthening Cultural Sector Resilience in Ukraine](#). One of its key outcomes is the agreement to create the Ukrainian Cultural Heritage Fund (UCHF), which will coordinate the international response and mobilise long-term support for recovery and reconstruction, to be formally established at the forthcoming Ukraine Recovery Conference (URC) to be held on 10-11 July 2025 in Rome.

On the eve of the expert workshop which will be held on 20 June 2025 in Florence, with the aim to help define the strategy, objectives, and governance of the future Ukrainian Cultural Heritage Fund, at which Europa Nostra will be represented by our Council member **Robert Quarles van Ufford**, Europa Nostra expresses its strong support to the creation of this Fund and calls upon the European Union Institutions and Member States to provide a significant contribution to this Fund, as part of the overall efforts in support of the recovery of Ukraine.

“As Europe’s leading civil society heritage network, we stand ready to contribute to the development and implementation of this Fund. In addition to supporting restoration projects related to cultural heritage, immovable and movable, damaged by war, we believe that such a Fund should also provide support for capacity building of cultural heritage institutions and operators, including civil society organisations”, declared **Hermann Parzinger**, Executive President of Europa Nostra.

“Through our various activities (7 Most Endangered Programme, European Heritage Awards / Europa Nostra Awards, the European Heritage Agora and the European Heritage Hub), Europa Nostra will continue to put its network, expertise, and commitment in support of heritage professionals and volunteers in Ukraine, with a special focus on civil society”, added Hermann Parzinger.