

# SAVING THE PAST SHAPING THE FUTURE

Ten years of protecting Europe's cultural heritage  
7 Most Endangered programme, 2013-2023





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# THE COHESIVE POWER OF HERITAGE



Cultural heritage is about far more than “stones and bones” from the past. It offers an endless source of inspiration and guidance for the future. When we can see the accomplishments of the people who came before us with our own eyes and touch them with our own hands, it is easy to be inspired to create something equally impressive in the future.

Cultural heritage is key to our European identity. Without it, economic growth would be meaningless. It has a cohesive power that connects European people and communities.

The European Investment Bank recognises this cohesive power. Heritage preservation is an important consideration when we review new investment projects or when we lend to cities or regions for urban renewal projects, which often come with a heritage component.

This cohesive power and its link with the EIB’s mission and activities is also why the EIB Institute launched the 7 Most Endangered programme (7ME) ten years ago with Europa Nostra, the leading European heritage network. We wanted to work together to preserve endangered monuments and sites.

This heritage programme mixes the vast cultural expertise and lobbying work of Europa Nostra with the technical appraisal and rescue planning skills of the EIB. It is also supported by volunteers, who are often EIB staff or retirees.

The programme is not (or not only) about money. Every project selected receives a €10 000 EIB Institute grant. This might not be enough to save a site, but it can help finance an awareness campaign or a feasibility study to safeguard an endangered monument, or provide the tarpaulin needed to protect a church’s roof during winter. And there may be a bigger benefit if the site becomes eligible for EIB advisory assistance or financing.

The EIB Institute and Europa Nostra have been able to save many sites threatened by neglect or destruction. With our collective networks, we have increased awareness about Europe's cultural heritage.

The purpose of the 7ME programme is not only to save sites. It is to bring people together, at local and regional levels, to figure out the best way to save our tangible and our intangible heritage.

The recent Costas Carras award launched by Europa Nostra and supported by the EIB Institute is a good example. The first laureate is a Romanian non-governmental organisation, ARA - Architecture. Restoration. Archaeology. It was instrumental in saving the heritage of Roşia Montană, one of the first 7ME sites threatened by a large-scale open-cast gold mining project.

Roşia Montană is now on the World Heritage List and on the List of World Heritage in Danger, and can therefore be considered as saved. But ARA's actions have not stopped there, with summer schools for architecture students, volunteer camps and a cultural heritage and community rescue and protection programme, connecting local owners of historic buildings, cultural heritage professionals, and donors and volunteers.

This shows the cohesive power of a vibrant civil society and how cooperation with experienced professionals and retired experts can lead to success. It highlights the importance of raising awareness about the threats to cultural heritage and puts a spotlight on the solutions.

It is not easy. It takes time, effort and partnerships. Fortunately, the successes greatly outnumber the failures. But the 7ME is not about figures. It's about preservation and renewal. The EIB Institute is proud to support this work.

Happy tenth anniversary, 7ME.

**Shiva Dustdar, Director and Dean, EIB Institute**

# DETERMINATION AND PARTNERSHIP



One decade of work has led to 56 endangered monuments and sites being selected across 31 countries. Some 20% of these projects have been successfully completed, another 50% are making good or medium progress, and only three projects can be considered failures.

This is good news. These positive results are the product of this innovative 7 Most Endangered programme combining Europa Nostra's architectural and historical expertise and its lobbying power with the technical and financial expertise of volunteers — retired EIB engineers, economists and financiers. And then we have the EIB Institute bringing everyone together.

Europa Nostra had been helping to protect endangered cultural heritage before 2013, but in the last ten years, the new cooperation with the EIB Institute has become a flagship initiative of both organisations.

Many studies have demonstrated the economic rationale of investing in cultural heritage and saving endangered monuments. Cultural monuments make Europe a number one tourist destination, and the role of heritage in urban renewal or rural development should not be downplayed. More recently, European Green Deal discussions underlined the positive contribution of cultural heritage in increasing resilience to climate change.

From castles to bridges, and from factories to churches, the projects nominated and selected for the 7ME are very diverse. Saving monuments or sites takes time, and requires sustained efforts at the local, regional and national levels. The technical reports produced by the EIB Institute experts are often of crucial importance, but rarely the last step in our work.

It is often easier to make progress when endangered monuments are suffering from neglect because of a long period of disinterest. It is more challenging in cases where a developer proposes a new use for the land. And even more challenging when a monument is affected by political decisions.





The ownership structure of a site can also be crucial. It is much more difficult to save sites with a large number of owners (such as multiple homeowners in the historic part of a city) than a monument that belongs to a single owner, be it public or private.

Access to funding is often key. The 7ME can only offer the EIB Heritage Grant. But it can point to opportunities involving EU structural funds, and possibly also EIB loans, or funds from national and private sources. A lot of the work involved can actually be done at a low cost. Saving a monument can even be cheaper than an alternative new investment, as the example of the Colbert Bridge in Dieppe shows.

For all these reasons, the 7ME deserves to live on and grow for another ten years and beyond.

**Guy Clause, co-founder of the 7 Most Endangered programme,  
Executive Vice-President of Europa Nostra**

# A PERFECT MATCH

## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS WITH SNEŠKA QUAEDVLIEG-MIHAILOVIĆ

**Sneška Quaedvlieg-Mihailović is Secretary General of Europa Nostra and a co-founder of the 7ME programme**



### HOW DID THE 7 MOST ENDANGERED PROGRAMME BEGIN?

I remember that I was on holiday about ten years ago when I received a work email. I try not to look at my work emails too much when I'm off, but I saw that this one was from the European Investment Bank. I wanted to be sure I answered it, because I never imagined that the EIB would want to work with us. It was from Guy Clausse, who later became the head of the EIB Institute. He had an idea for a new heritage project to save cultural sites in Europe and wondered if I wanted to be a partner. I had dreamt of starting something like this for a long time. I said yes right away and it has been a perfect match since then.



### WHY DO YOU CARE SO MUCH ABOUT PRESERVING EUROPE'S HERITAGE?

The preservation of history has been important for me since I was very young. I learnt French at an early age and also learnt to play the piano for ten years, and I think this sparked my interest in Europe's past. I wanted to study art history when I grew up, but everyone told me that was crazy, that I couldn't earn money doing that. So I studied law, but I never stopped loving the European idea and the importance of protecting our culture. I grew up in Belgrade, in former Yugoslavia, where we enjoyed the idea of multiculturalism for a long time. And then I lost my country and it was traumatic. Shortly after I joined Europa Nostra, the city of Dubrovnik was bombed, and many cultural sites there were damaged. I think all my life experiences have spurred my mission of promoting Europe through culture and doing my best to bring Europeans together.





### **WHAT DOES THE FUTURE HOLD FOR THE 7 MOST ENDANGERED PROGRAMME?**

Ten years ago, when we established the programme, we were pioneers. But now it has become a brand with its own identity, and people expect a lot from us. We have saved a lot of sites. Fighting to preserve Europe's values and cultures is much more in the public eye today, in the consciousness of leaders on the local and international levels. So I think we have a promising future, because people realise that our heritage sites are not renewable. If you lose them, they don't come back. As outside forces try to pull us apart, having something that keeps Europe together, like our culture, helps us overcome crises and stick together.



### **WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IF HERITAGE PROTECTION PROGRAMMES DID NOT EXIST?**

There will always be people on the local level fighting for their heritage. We cannot say that without us, nothing would be saved. But the beauty of this programme is that it gives Europe the ability to show its solidarity and to show that there is a European story that must be saved, one that gives a European connection to people. We are amplifying the work of local people, but they are the ones doing most of the work to save our past for the sake of our future. And they will keep on doing this hard work.



### **HOW WOULD YOU RESPOND IF SOMEONE TOLD YOU THAT WE DON'T NEED TO SPEND TIME PROTECTING THE PAST?**

I would say that it is very dangerous to build the future without knowing the past. We are very much future-oriented today, but we all come from many generations of past human ingenuity and learning. We should draw on the past as inspiration for the future. The cultural diversity that we have inherited brings us together and reminds us of what connects us across all borders. We will always have people who try to divide us, tell us that we're different and that one culture is more important than another. But for me, preserving our common heritage is one of the best antidotes to fighting nationalism and the manipulation of our past, our history and our culture. We are promoting the humanity in all of us and the beauty of diversity.



# HOW DOES THE 7ME PROGRAMME WORK?

Every year in June or July, Europa Nostra opens a call to nominate monuments that are in danger in Europe, running through to September. Europa Nostra members and partner organisations as well as public and private bodies active in the heritage field can nominate a site by filling in a form.

Proposals are assessed by a committee of heritage experts from Europa Nostra and the EIB Institute who shortlist up to 14 submissions by the end of the year. The final list of the 7 Most Endangered sites is selected by the Board of Europa Nostra.

Monuments and sites are primarily selected taking into account their heritage and cultural value, as well as the imminence of the danger they are facing. Local community engagement and the likelihood of public and private stakeholder support to save the sites are also crucial elements in the selection process. The potential of the sites to act as a catalyst for sustainable socioeconomic development is another important factor.

Heritage and technical experts from Europa Nostra and the EIB Institute undertake assessment missions to the 7ME sites organised with the nominators. The multidisciplinary teams help formulate a feasible action plan in cooperation with national and local public and private stakeholders. A technical report is then prepared summarising the results and recommendations.

Assistance can consist, for example, of concrete suggestions for alternative, viable functions for the buildings or sites once restored, technical support to assess alternatives, financial advice on European funding possibilities, help in finding suitable public or private partners or skills, and knowledge development.

In parallel, since 2021, each of the seven projects selected has been eligible for an EIB grant of up to €10 000, prepared in collaboration with the nominator and submitted to the EIB Institute for approval. This contribution must bring some added value to the project, for instance as seed money for the preparation of a marketing or tourism plan, or a specific study.



# A MAP OF 7ME SITES

## 56 SITES

**2013**

Roman Amphitheatre in Durrës,

**ALBANIA**

Buffer zone of the historic centre of Nicosia,

**CYPRUS**

Fortifications of Vauban, Briançon,

**FRANCE**

Renaissance Monastery of San Benedetto Po,

**ITALY**

Manueline style monastery and church of Jesus, Setúbal,

**PORTUGAL**

Roşia Montană mining landscape,

**ROMANIA**

St George Armenian church, Mardin,

**TÜRKIYE**

**2014**

Bourla Theatre historic stage machinery, Antwerp,

**BELGIUM**

Kastoria neighbourhoods of Dolcho and Apozari, Kastoria,

**GREECE**

Alessandria Citadel,

**ITALY**

Carillons of the Mafra National Palace,

**PORTUGAL**

Wooden churches in southern Transylvania and northern Oltenia,

**ROMANIA**

Colour row settlement, Chernyakhovsk,

**RUSSIA**

Subotica Synagogue,

**SERBIA**

**2016**

Archaeological site of Ererouyk and village of Ani Pemza,

**ARMENIA**

Patarei Sea Fortress, Tallinn,

**ESTONIA**

Helsinki-Malmi Airport,

**FINLAND**

Colbert Swing Bridge, Dieppe,

**FRANCE**

Kamos of Chios, Chios Island,

**GREECE**

Convent of St Anthony of Padua, Extremadura,

**SPAIN**

Ancient city of Hasankeyf and its surroundings,

**TÜRKIYE**

**2018**

Post-Byzantine churches in Voskopoja and Vithkuqi,

**ALBANIA**

Historic centre of Vienna,

**AUSTRIA**

Buzludzha Monument,

**BULGARIA**

David Gareji Monasteries and Hermitage,

**GEORGIA**

Constanța Casino,

**ROMANIA**

Prinkipo Greek Orphanage,  
Princes' Islands,

**TÜRKIYE**

Grimsby Ice Factory,

**UNITED KINGDOM**

**2020**

National Theatre of Albania,  
Tirana,

**ALBANIA**

Castle Jezeří, Horní Jiřetín,

**CZECH REPUBLIC**

Castle of Sammezzano,  
Tuscany,

**ITALY**

Y-block, Government  
Quarter, Oslo,

**NORWAY**

Szombierki Power Plant,  
Bytom,

**POLAND**

Belgrade Fortress and its  
surroundings,

**SERBIA**

Plečnik Stadium, Ljubljana,

**SLOVENIA**

**2021**

Achensee Steam Cog  
Railway, Tyrol,

**AUSTRIA**

Historic Cemetery Complex  
of Mirogoj, Zagreb,

**CROATIA**

Five Southern Aegean  
Islands,

**GREECE**

Giusti Garden, Verona,

**ITALY**

Dečani Monastery,

**KOSOVO\***

Central Post Office, Skopje,

**NORTH MACEDONIA**

San Juan de Socueva Chapel  
and Hermitage, Cantabria,

**SPAIN**

**2022**

Zogu Bridge,

**ALBANIA**

Récollets Convent, Nivelles,

**BELGIUM**

Garden city La Butte Rouge,  
near Paris,

**FRANCE**

Historic centre of Stolberg,

**GERMANY**

Neptune Baths,  
Băile Herculane,

**ROMANIA**

Orléans-Borbón Palace,  
near Cádiz,

**SPAIN**

Crèvecoeur Fortress,  
Den Bosch,

**NETHERLANDS**

**2023**

Kortrijk Railway Station,  
Kortrijk,

**BELGIUM**

Partisan Memorial Cemetery,  
Mostar,

**BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA**

Tchakvinji Fortress, Zugdidi,

**GEORGIA**

Sisters' House Ensemble,  
former Moravian settlement,  
Kleinwelka,

**GERMANY**

Memento Park, Budapest,

**HUNGARY**

Cultural Landscape of Sveti  
Stefan, Paštrovići,

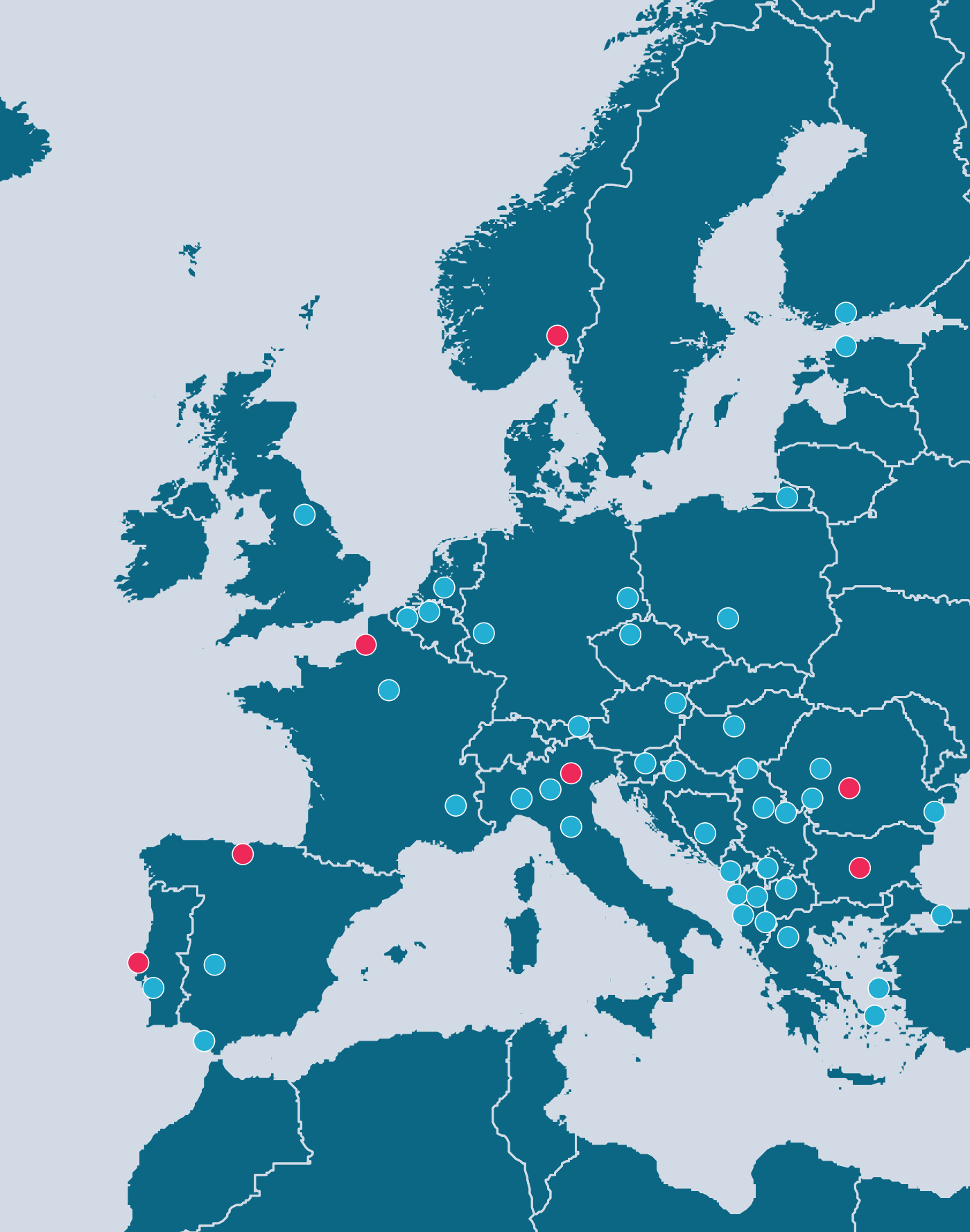
**MONTENEGRO**

Watermills of Bistrica,  
Petrovac na Mlavi,

**SERBIA**

In addition, in 2016 the  
Venice Lagoon was declared  
the most endangered  
heritage site, as was  
Ukrainian cultural heritage in  
2022.

\* This designation is without prejudice to the positions expressed by the EU Member States on Kosovo's status and is in line with United Nations Security Council Resolution No. 1244/1999 and the International Court of Justice Opinion of 22 July 2010 on Kosovo's declaration of independence.





● 7 Most Endangered selected for this brochure



## SUCCESS STORIES

# IN VERONA, A GARDEN IS BORN AGAIN

## GIARDINO GIUSTI IN VERONA

The 16<sup>th</sup> century Giusti Garden (Giardino Giusti) in Verona, one of the 7 Most Endangered 2021, was the first beneficiary of an EIB Heritage Grant, designed to help save threatened sites.

The €10 000 grant helped to restore the garden through replanting and other work. The project reinforced the resilience of the site following extensive damage caused by three severe thunderstorms in 2020.

The garden dates back to 1570 and was planned by Count Agostino Giusti. It is one of the finest examples of a typical Renaissance garden that has survived in its original form and still belongs to the same family. The extraordinary cultural significance of the Giusti Garden, which is open to the public and attracts many visitors, stems from its Italian garden design and features.

The storm of August 2020 and the indirect impact of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 and 2021 highlighted the garden's vulnerability to extreme weather and neglect.

"It is our duty to do what we can to safeguard our historical architecture and our natural parks and gardens, which serve as a reminder of past centuries," says Giovanni Perbellini, an architect who lives near the garden and who proposed the restoration project to the 7ME programme.

**“IT IS OUR DUTY TO DO WHAT WE CAN TO SAFEGUARD OUR HISTORICAL ARCHITECTURE AND OUR NATURAL PARKS AND GARDENS, WHICH SERVE AS A REMINDER OF PAST CENTURIES”**

The technical report produced by 7ME experts from Europa Nostra and the EIB Institute proposed ways to preserve the fragile beauty of the site and its historical and architectural value, and to ensure that it is preserved long into the future.

The owners of the Giusti Garden also applied for EU funds since Italy had earmarked financing for the rehabilitation of historical gardens in the NextGenerationEU programme. In their application, they underlined that the garden had been selected under the 7ME, and included the 7ME technical report. They believe that the push received by the 7ME programme contributed significantly to their selection. The Giusti Garden ranked 63<sup>rd</sup> out of 813 sites selected from among thousands of applications, and was allocated €1.1 million.





Photo credit: Europa Nostra, Giardino Giusti







Photo credit: Europa Nostra, Giardino Giusti

# A NEW LIFE FOR BULGARIA'S ICONIC SITE

## THE BUZLUDZHA MONUMENT

Built in brutalist architecture during the communist era on top of a Balkan mountain range crossing Bulgaria, the Buzludzha Monument was meant to illustrate the regime's achievements and commemorate the creation of the Bulgarian Communist Party in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century.

The inside of this circular concrete building is decorated with mosaics that celebrate the historical figures and milestones achieved during those years. The free-standing dome (60 metres in diameter) covers the main ritual hall and the two circular mosaic walls. A 70-metre tower was erected as part of the monument, crowned by a communist star that could be illuminated in red to be seen from very far away.

A few years after its inauguration, when the communist regime fell, the monument was abandoned. The copper sheets covering the roof were stolen, windows and equipment that had been left behind were taken and part of the mosaics severely deteriorated.

The nominator of the project, Buzludzha Project Foundation, wants to give a new and different life to the monument by making it safer and more functional, salvaging as many of the mosaics as possible and identifying new ways to use and integrate the monument into its location in a natural park, near the Tombs of the Ancient Kings of Thrace (a UNESCO World Heritage site).

"It's just an amazing structure because of the way it looks, but also because it is an important part of Bulgarian history," says Dora Ivanova, who created the foundation to preserve the building and nominated it with the help of Richard Morten Fawcus of the University of Central Lancashire in the United Kingdom. "This site grabbed my attention from the very beginning. I was so impressed that we have such a masterpiece of architecture in Bulgaria and was shocked that it just lay abandoned."

After the 7ME report issued in 2018, the site also received interest from the Getty Foundation, which repeatedly donated money to rehabilitate the mosaics and prepare a comprehensive recovery project. The city of Kazanlak and the Stara Zagora region, where the monument is located, are interested in rehabilitating the monument and integrating it into an ambitious regional project to promote responsible tourism. A festival, Open Buzludzha, was organised in 2021 and 2022.









Ivanova, whose foundation is based in Sofia, said the monument's nomination by 7ME really boosted her efforts and offered European recognition that this is a special cultural site that must be saved.

"In the past, the monument was not considered a heritage site and it was just left to crumble," she says. "This new recognition is priceless and very much appreciated. It has helped us a lot. Today the monument is already listed as a national heritage site."

The use of European funds is being considered along with other possible funding sources. A good example of dissonant heritage, Buzludzha can help educate future generations to better understand history and the values of democracy.

"Protecting sites like this is important because they carry our cultural identity and unite society over common goals," Ivanova says. "Cultural heritage sites have widely unexplored economic potential, and they can bring sustainable tourism and development funds into regions. They are also very important for education purposes and for talking about the past, especially if the past is difficult or controversial."

**“ THIS NEW RECOGNITION IS PRICELESS AND VERY MUCH APPRECIATED. IT HAS HELPED US A LOT. TODAY THE MONUMENT IS ALREADY LISTED AS A NATIONAL HERITAGE SITE ”**

# COLLABORATION SAVES DOZENS OF CHURCHES

## WOODEN CHURCHES OF SOUTHERN TRANSYLVANIA AND NORTHERN OLTENIA (ROMANIA)

This extensive programme comprising over 60 wooden churches in remote villages in these two regions was selected as one of the 7 Most Endangered heritage sites in 2014.

Several churches have been improved under the guidance of the very active non-governmental organisation Pro Patrimonio Foundation.

Notable among these is the wooden church in the village of Urși in Vâlcea County, Romania. This beautiful 18<sup>th</sup> century church decorated with frescoes painted in the post-Byzantine tradition was restored in an exemplary manner using traditional materials and techniques. It was done so collaboratively by the local community, experts and international volunteers. It was one of the first examples of crowdfunding, which was used to help support the costs.

This work was recognised through the Grand Prix and the Public Choice Award at the 2021 European Heritage Awards/Europa Nostra Awards, Europe's top honour in the field of cultural

**“ THIS BEAUTIFUL 18<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY CHURCH DECORATED WITH FRESCOES PAINTED IN THE POST-BYZANTINE TRADITION WAS RESTORED IN AN EXEMPLARY MANNER USING TRADITIONAL MATERIALS AND TECHNIQUES ”**

heritage. These awards took place at a ceremony held in Venice during the European Cultural Heritage Summit 2021. Some 7 000 people from all over Europe voted for the Public Choice Award via the Europa Nostra website.

In addition to providing advice on better cooperation between the parties and rationalising the phasing of the numerous churches, the EIB Institute also financially supported the production of a Wooden Church Maintenance Manual, published in Bucharest in 2017 in English and Romanian. This manual was designed to be used by local priests and decision-makers to anticipate and prevent the deterioration of these wooden structures. It has already been used in several other countries with similar churches, for example in Norway.

In addition, an EIB Institute grant enabled technical studies to be carried out on two churches, one of which is now being restored.







Photo credit: Europa Nostra, Mihai Bodea

# BELLS OF THE FUTURE

## MAFRA PALACE CARILLONS IN PORTUGAL

On the afternoon of 2 February 2020, after 20 years of silence and a complex restoration process, the carillons of the Mafra National Palace in Portugal, listed among the 7 Most Endangered 2014, were played again during a memorable inaugural concert that brought together over 6 000 people in the square in front of the palace.

Highlighting the project under the 7 Most Endangered programme helped public authorities to prioritise it. A technical and financial report by the EIB Institute underlined the need and justification for the rehabilitation and supported the approach adopted.

**“ THE RESTORATION OF THE CARILLONS (...) HAS HELPED TO ATTRACT NEW AUDIENCES AND INTEGRATE THE MAFRA PALACE (...) INTO THE NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL TOURISM AND MUSICAL CIRCUITS ”**

The conservation programme was almost entirely financed by the Portuguese Ministry of Culture for a total cost of €1.7 million, and ran from May 2018 to December 2019.

The two towers of the Basilica of the Mafra National Palace, a key work of the Baroque era in Portugal, feature a unique set of 119 cast bronze bells, divided into carillon, liturgical and hour bells. These outstanding musical instruments, which cover a range of four octaves, are the largest surviving 18<sup>th</sup> century carillons in the world.

Due to lack of maintenance and poor conservation, the wooden structures that support the bells had been at risk of collapse, threatening the integrity of the towers and of the monument itself. The bells had also deteriorated over the years and were in poor condition.

The restoration of the carillons has strengthened the monument’s links to music, through exchanges with universities and music schools. It has also helped to attract new audiences and integrate the Mafra Palace — a key work of the Baroque era in Portugal featuring a basilica, a convent, a royal palace and a library that houses 36 000 books — into the national and international tourism and musical circuits.









Photo credit: Europa Nostra, Centro Nacional de Cultura

# A DRIVING FORCE FOR SUSTAINABILITY

## SAN JUAN DE SOCUEVA CHAPEL AND HERMITAGE, CANTABRIA, SPAIN

San Juan de Socueva is an ancient hermitage and chapel set into the rocky mountains just south of the municipality of Arredondo, Cantabria, in northern Spain. It was built next to a series of caves that had been inhabited by humans since ancient times.

Having only recently been dated back to 660-680 AD, the chapel is thought to be the oldest religious construction in Cantabria. It still retains its religious function and is deeply rooted in the community, which periodically still celebrates the cult of St John the Baptist.

The site, owned by the Diocese of Cantabria, and its surroundings including a rough access path, had greatly deteriorated and needed urgent repairs.

Thanks to the local community, the site was nominated as one of the 7 Most Endangered sites in 2021. Based on a technical report by EIB Institute experts, the Department of Culture of Cantabria is ready to finance the immediate restoration of the site and to regularly transfer funds to the city council to undertake maintenance and ensure that it is safe for the public.

The rehabilitation of the site could be a driving force for the future sustainable development of this rural environment where the population is declining.

**“ THE REHABILITATION OF THE SITE COULD BE A DRIVING FORCE FOR THE FUTURE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF THIS RURAL ENVIRONMENT WHERE THE POPULATION IS DECLINING ”**

The City Council of Arredondo has also expressed its interest in promoting the site and has offered to dedicate some space to this on the second floor of its headquarters. A comprehensive exhibition, including a 3-D presentation and other information material, is being considered.

The Government of Cantabria is going to build a new museum to replace and expand the existing Museum of Prehistory and Archaeology of Cantabria and has applied for EIB financing. The 7ME team has suggested creating a room specifically for promoting the site (perhaps even reproducing it), which would significantly improve its visibility among the public.



Photo credit: Europa Nostra, Miguel de Arriba



Photo credit: Europa Nostra, Miguel de Arriba

# JUST ONE PERSON CAN SAVE A BRIDGE

## COLBERT BRIDGE IN DIEPPE

Contemporaneous with the Eiffel Tower and using the same building techniques and materials (puddled iron), the Colbert Bridge in Dieppe, France, is the last large swing bridge in Europe still operating with its original hydraulic mechanism.

Designed by the engineer Paul Alexandre and opened in 1889, the bridge is the longest of its kind, with a 70.5-metre roadway. The operating cabin, designed by the architect Jean Prouvé, is an elegant complement to the very characteristic silhouette of the bridge, and is also of historic and aesthetic interest.

The Colbert Bridge is the only link between Dieppe's historic centre and the harbour neighbourhood of Le Pollet, and is crossed by 12 000 vehicles and 1 800 pedestrians every day. It has operated continuously and very reliably for nearly 130 years. The rehabilitation of the 1889 bridge will cost €4.5 million to €5 million.

Protecting the bridge has not been easy. Pascal Stefani, a technical engineer in Dieppe who nominated the bridge for the 7ME programme, became interested in the project partly because he loves beautiful machines. To save the bridge, he helped collect thousands of signatures, file funding applications, and seek the agreement of politicians.

"I spent ten hours a day for seven years of my life working on this," he says. "Thankfully, it was a success."

**“ MEN BUILD TOO MANY WALLS  
AND NOT ENOUGH BRIDGES ”**

Threatened with demolition by the port authorities, the bridge was listed among the 7 Most Endangered sites in 2016. The experts recommended that the Colbert Bridge be nominated for National Monument status with the utmost urgency. The bridge was classified in 2020, which means that it has been saved.

When asked why it's important to save bridges and why he worked so hard on the project, Stefani responds with a quote from Isaac Newton: "Men build too many walls and not enough bridges."

The bridge is too important to the local identity to let it fall apart, Stefani adds.



“I have passed this bridge a thousand times, as have most of the local ‘dieppois,’ and I have lots of memories,” he says. “I could not bear to see this perfectly functional bridge destroyed when a new one would not have had its strength, elegance and reliability.”

## **BATTLES LOST**

### **Y-BLOCK, GOVERNMENT QUARTER, OSLO, NORWAY**

This modernist building from the 1960s designed in a brutalist style by architect Erling Viksjø, with an iconic shape and sandblasted murals by Picasso, withstood a terrorist attack in 2011 that killed eight people and injured 200.

The site stood as a memorial to the victims of the attacks, a symbol of the resilience of the democratic values that terrorism failed to destroy.

The Y-block formed part of a unified complex with the adjacent high-rise from 1958. Towards the end of its construction, Pablo Picasso designed two murals, "The Fisherman" and "The Seagull," to decorate the Y-block in the innovative sandblasted concrete technique, a new method developed by the building's architect, artist Carl Nesjar.

In 2020, following intense public debate and peaceful demonstrations halted by the COVID-19 pandemic, and despite its nomination as one of the 7 Most Endangered sites in 2020, the building was demolished. Its murals were removed and are expected to be incorporated into a replacement building.





Photo credit: Europa Nostra, Trond Isaksen, Statsbygg

## ANCIENT CITY OF HASANKEYF AND ITS SURROUNDINGS (TÜRKIYE)

Sitting on the banks of the Tigris River in south-eastern Türkiye, not far from Syria, the 12 000 year-old settlement of Hasankeyf had been home to almost every major Mesopotamian civilisation.

From Neolithic caves to Roman ruins and Medieval monuments, Hasankeyf was a living museum of epic proportions with archaeological remains dating from the 12<sup>th</sup> to the 15<sup>th</sup> centuries.

The pylons of the Artukid Bridge and the minarets of the two Ayyubid mosques dominated its skyline. It also housed the Zeynel Bey Tomb, the only remaining example of Timurid architecture in the country. The ancient city of Hasankeyf and its surroundings were classified as a first-degree archaeological site by the Turkish government's Supreme Board of Monuments in 1978 and as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

In July 2020, despite considerable opposition and its nomination as one of the 7 Most Endangered sites in 2016, and despite being on the watch list of 100 most endangered sites in the world, this exceptionally rich, multicultural history and heritage site was completely submerged in the waters of the Ilisu hydroelectric dam.

Only eight of its historical monuments were moved to an uphill archaeological park.

Hasankeyf attracted hundreds of thousands of visitors each year.



Photo credit: Europa Nostra, Hasankeyf Matters

# PARTNERS



Europa Nostra is the European voice of civil society committed to safeguarding and promoting cultural and natural heritage. Founded in 1963, it is a pan-European federation of heritage NGOs supported by a wide network of public bodies, private companies and individuals, covering over 40 countries. It is recognised as the largest and most representative heritage network in Europe, maintaining close relations with the EU, the Council of Europe, UNESCO and other international bodies.



The EIB Institute was set up within the EIB Group to support social, cultural and academic initiatives across Europe. It fosters community and citizenship participation with the European Investment Bank.



Creative Europe is the European Commission’s flagship programme to support the culture and audiovisual sectors. With a budget of €2.44 billion (2021-2027), it invests in actions that reinforce cultural diversity and respond to the needs and challenges of the cultural and creative sectors. It is divided into three strands: the Culture strand, the Media strand and the Cross-Sectoral strand.





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