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EUROPA NOSTRA

The European Voice of Civil Society Committed to Cultural Heritage

SPRING 2026 NEWSLETTER



Aerial view of Nicosia, host city of the European Cultural Heritage Summit 2026.

***Dear members, partners and supporters of Europa Nostra,
Dear colleagues and friends,***

Welcome to the Spring edition of our newsletter! In a world marked by ongoing conflicts, geopolitical instability, serious threats to democracy and the rule of law, climate challenges and rapid technological change, the need to champion what unites us has become more urgent and

important than ever. Cultural heritage is a key resource for defending and strengthening peace, democracy, sustainability, social cohesion and resilience. It is also a prime resource for fostering a sense of belonging to a wider community, from local to global level.

Against this backdrop, Europa Nostra and the Europa Nostra Heritage Hub in Nicosia are organising — with the shared sense of even greater commitment and responsibility — the [European Cultural Heritage Summit 2026](#) from 26 to 30 May in Nicosia, under the motto **“Heritage as the Soul of Mare Nostrum”**. Holding our Summit in Cyprus at this point of time is particularly meaningful. Situated at the crossroads of Europe and the Middle East, Cyprus experiences both the complexities and the opportunities of the shared heritage of the Mediterranean — Mare Nostrum. The island’s experience with division and reconciliation efforts offers a fitting backdrop for discussions on heritage as a peace-building instrument.

Earlier this year, as part of our ongoing and overarching advocacy efforts in favour of culture and cultural heritage in Europe, Europa Nostra — together with Culture Action Europe and the European Cultural Foundation — co-hosted the [Cultural Deal for Europe Policy Conversation](#) in Brussels, featuring the participation of **Glenn Micallef**, European Commissioner for Intergenerational Fairness, Youth, Culture and Sport. Speakers emphasised the need to ensure the effective implementation of the [Culture Compass for Europe](#) and to secure adequate and sustainable investment in culture — including the related allocation of at least 2% of the next EU budget for the period 2028-2034.

Shortly afterwards, the Jury of the European Heritage Awards / Europa Nostra Awards met on 11-13 February in Marseille, France, to select this year’s winners. Once again, we were impressed by the excellent quality of the applications submitted by organisations and individuals from 40 countries, which mirrors the outstanding expertise and commitment of heritage practitioners and volunteers across Europe. **The public announcement of the 2026 winners of the Awards will be made on 21 April.**

More recently we announced this year’s winners of the Costa Carras European Awards organised together with Elliniki Etairia, our country representation in Greece, and launched the call for nominations of candidates for the Helena Vaz da Silva European Award, organised together with Centro Nacional de Cultura, our country representation in Portugal.

Together with our main partners, the European Investment Bank Institute and the European Commission, on 26 February during an online event, we announced the [7 Most Endangered monuments and heritage sites in Europe for 2026](#), and underscored our strong commitment to mobilising efforts at all levels of governance towards saving these endangered gems of our shared heritage.

Another milestone event was the [joint Europa Nostra/ALIPH exhibition and related panel discussion](#) showcasing women at the forefront of protecting heritage and democratic values, held on 3 March in Brussels. From Ukraine and Moldova to Georgia and Italy, the stories shared during the panel by three of the women featured in the exhibition demonstrated how protecting heritage is inseparable from protecting identity and memory.

As you will read below, the first quarter of 2026 has been marked by intense activity on many fronts across Europe and beyond, including numerous activities organised as part of our

European Heritage Hub project which are shared with you through another dedicated newsletter.

Our joint action is needed more than ever! We look forward to counting on your input and active participation in our upcoming activities and events, in particular the Summit in Nicosia, in defence of our shared values and for the benefit of a more peaceful, sustainable and inclusive future for Europe and its citizens.

Cordially yours,

Hermann Parzinger, Executive President

Sneška Quaedvlieg-Mihailović, Secretary General

HIGHLIGHTS



Join the European Cultural Heritage Summit 2026 in Nicosia, Cyprus

The European Cultural Heritage Summit 2026 is taking place from 26 to 30 May in Nicosia, under the motto “Heritage as the Soul of Mare Nostrum”. Organised by Europa Nostra in cooperation with the Europa Nostra Heritage Hub in Nicosia, this Summit is held under the patronage of the Cyprus Presidency of the Council of the EU, and is supported by the European Union.

From the [In Varietate Concordia Talk](#) – bringing together leading cultural figures from the wider

Mediterranean region to reflect on the shared heritage that has shaped its civilisations across millennia – to the [European Heritage Awards Ceremony](#) – celebrating the extraordinary achievements of the winners of the European Heritage Awards / Europa Nostra Awards 2026 – the Nicosia Summit will highlight the (geo)political, societal, economic and environmental relevance of cultural heritage for Europe and the wider Mediterranean.

The [European Heritage Policy Agora](#) will explore how cultural heritage can drive sustainable development across the Mediterranean, while the [European Heritage Hub Forum](#) will focus on cultural heritage as a powerful vector of peace across the Mediterranean, with a special emphasis on the Middle East.

The full version of the [Summit Programme](#) is published on our website.

Registration is open until 11 May.

[Read more](#)



White Tower in Mellieħa
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Inclusive European Heritage Residency 2026

Various sites in Malta
13-19 September

Call for Participants

Apply by 15 May

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DIN L-ART
ĦELWA
THE NATIONAL TRUST FOR MALTA

Apply for the Inclusive European Heritage Residency 2026 in Malta

Europa Nostra and INTO – the International National Trusts Organisation, in collaboration with Din l-Art Ħelwa, are organising the second edition of the Inclusive European Heritage Residencies from 13 to 19 September in Malta. Focusing on “Building Strong Heritage Organisations”, this practical Residency is designed to support small or medium-sized organisations looking to reinforce their capacity, enhance financial sustainability, improve governance, engage volunteers, increase visibility and effectively manage small heritage sites or natural areas. Both cultural and environmental organisations are welcome. Around 10 heritage

professionals will be selected to gather in Malta to exchange best practices, discuss key challenges, and explore strategies for building resilient heritage organisations.

Applications must be submitted by 15 May.

[Read more](#)



Cultural Deal for Europe Policy Conversation calls for culture and civil society to shape Europe’s future strategic agenda

The sixth edition of the annual Cultural Deal for Europe Policy Conversation, entitled “When Culture Wins, Europe Wins”, took place on 3 February at BOZAR in Brussels, bringing together over 250 participants — policymakers, representatives of civil society, and cultural and heritage stakeholders from across Europe. **Glenn Micallef**, European Commissioner for Intergenerational Fairness, Youth, Culture and Sport, contributed to the conversation (*photo above*). Co-organised by Europa Nostra, Culture Action Europe and the European Cultural Foundation, the event reaffirmed the key role of culture and cultural heritage in shaping Europe’s future, particularly in relation to democracy, social cohesion, resilience and long-term strategic priorities. Speakers emphasised the need to ensure the effective implementation of the Culture Compass for Europe, and to secure adequate and sustainable investment in culture — including the allocation of at least 2% of the EU budget 2028-2034.

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Europa Nostra participates in Lviv Conference reinforcing international solidarity for Ukraine's endangered cultural heritage

Europa Nostra reaffirmed its commitment to safeguarding Ukraine's endangered cultural heritage during the "Ukraine Culture Conference: Cooperation for Resilience", held in Lviv, on 30 March. Represented by Vice-President **Natalia Moussienko**, our organisation highlighted the importance of its expertise and international reputation in boosting an even more coordinated support for Ukraine's cultural sector — especially through the recent launch of the Ukrainian Cultural Heritage Fund (UCHF). Europa Nostra's Secretary General **Sneška Quaedvlieg-Mihailović** was appointed to the Board of Directors of the UCHF in January — an important instrument for mobilising international resources for heritage protection and recovery. The conference brought together high-level culture representatives from across Europe and beyond, as well as diplomats, representatives of international organisations, and media. European Commissioner **Glenn Micallef** addressed participants via video message and reaffirmed the European Union's continued support for Ukraine's cultural sector.

[Read more](#)



Joint Europa Nostra/ALIPH exhibition and related panel discussion showcase women at the forefront of protecting heritage and democratic values

On 3 March, at the European Parliament in Brussels, Europa Nostra and ALIPH – the International alliance for the protection of heritage, hosted the panel discussion “Women Safeguarding Cultural Heritage in Contexts of Conflict and Crisis” and inaugurated the outdoor exhibition “Portraits of Women – Beyond the Stones”. The event, in the framework of #Women4Heritage network, brought together inspiring voices from across Europe and beyond, highlighting the vital role women play in safeguarding cultural heritage and strengthening communities in times of conflict and crisis. The stories shared during the panel by three of the women featured in the exhibition (*photo above*), **Lesia Voroniuk** (Ukraine), **Mariné Mizandari** (Georgia) and **Susy Galeone** (Italy), demonstrated their on-the-ground experiences protecting heritage in the face of adversity.

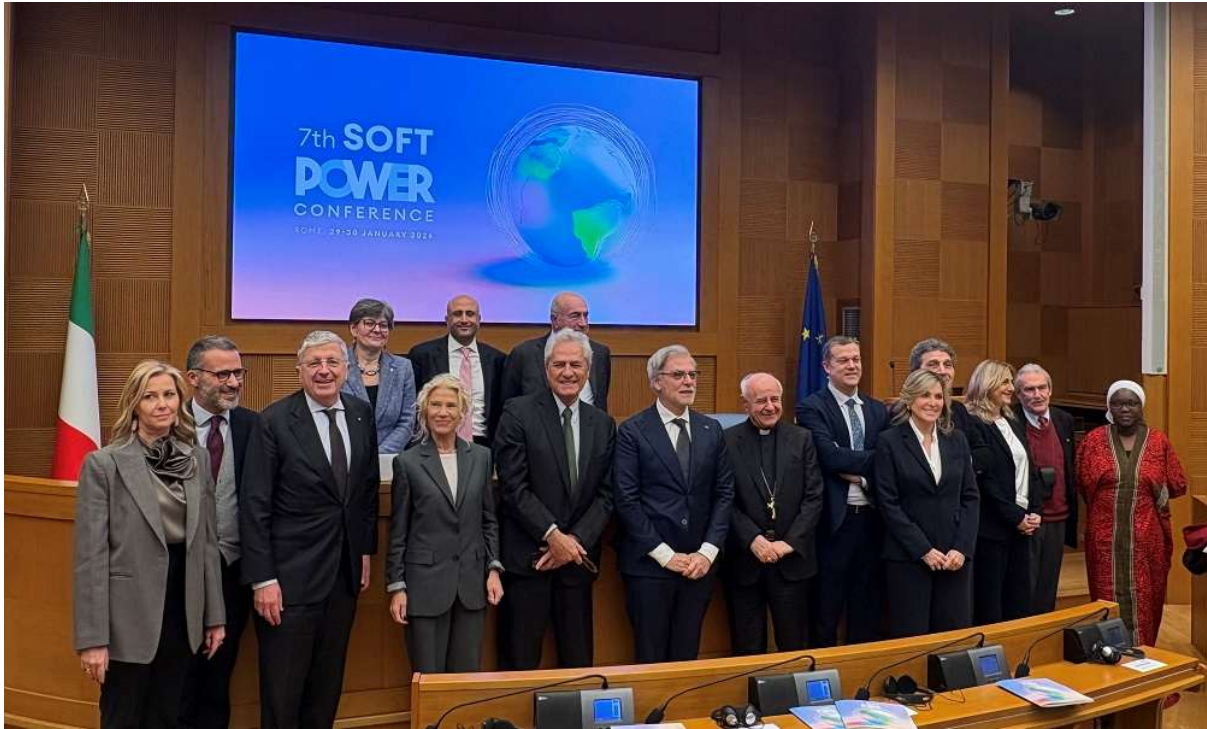
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Interview with Inge Bisgaard, Heritage Champion from Greenland/Denmark

As the world turned its eye to Greenland in January, Europa Nostra caught up with Inge Bisgaard, a lifelong Greenlander who has devoted her career to evaluating, safeguarding and communicating about Greenland's built environment. She has combined national insight with international expertise to become one of Greenland and Denmark's foremost building conservation specialists. Since 2011, Bisgaard has served as museum curator at the Greenland National Museum and Archives in Nuuk. In 2025, Bisgaard was the Grand Prix winner in the category Heritage Champions of the European Heritage Awards / Europa Nostra Awards, the highest heritage accolade in Europe.

[Read interview](#)



Europa Nostra's Secretary General contributes to the Soft Power Club Conference in Rome

On 29-30 January, Europa Nostra's Secretary General took part in the Soft Power Conference in Rome, organised by the Soft Power Club of which she is a member. This Club was founded by its Chairman, **Francesco Rutelli**, former Italian Minister of Culture and former Mayor of Rome. On the second day, she contributed to a debate opened by the Italian Minister of Culture, **Alessandro Giuli**. Bringing together national and international experts, activists and business leaders, the conference explored the role of artificial intelligence and its growing impact on soft power. In her remarks, **Sneška Quaadvlieg-Mihailović** highlighted the importance of combining "ancestral intelligence" — rooted in shared values and cultural awareness — with artificial intelligence.

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Europa Nostra issues statement of grave concern over ongoing destruction of heritage in the wider region of Middle East

In a statement issued on 11 March, Europa Nostra expressed grave concern over the escalating hostilities in Iran and the wider region of the Middle East and the serious risks these pose to cultural heritage. Beyond the tragic human suffering, historic sites, museums, cultural institutions and heritage professionals across the region face growing threats of destruction. Recent reports indicate damage to important historic sites in Tehran, including the World Heritage-listed Golestan Palace, as well as damage to World Heritage sites in Isfahan. Missiles have also hit architecturally significant modernist buildings in Tel Aviv’s “White City” and the World Heritage site of Tyre in Lebanon (*image above*). Europa Nostra joins other international heritage organisations in expressing alarm at the ongoing risks facing cultural heritage across the region and calls on all parties to respect their obligations under international humanitarian law.

[Read more](#)



Europa Nostra announces the 7 Most Endangered Heritage Sites in Europe for 2026

On 26 February, Europa Nostra released the list of the 7 Most Endangered heritage sites in Europe for 2026 – Katapola Village and Ancient City of Minoa, Greece, Fábri Watermill, Feked, Hungary, Blower Hall, Esch-sur-Alzette, Luxembourg, British Barracks at Fort Chambray, Gozo, Malta, Vale de Milhaços Gunpowder Factory, Seixal, Portugal, Reformed Church of Sântămăria Orlea, Romania, and Weifert's Brewery, Pančevo, Serbia (*image above*). This year's list comprises a wide variety of heritage sites – from the remains of an ancient city in Greece to an early 20th-century monumental industrial heritage structure in Luxembourg – facing major challenges, such as unsuitable development projects, neglect or lack of funding. The announcement was made at an online event held in the frame of the nomination-based 7 Most Endangered Programme, which is run with the support of the European Investment Bank Institute.

[Read more](#)



Europa Nostra participates in the EIB Group Forum 2026 in Luxembourg

Europa Nostra joined a wide range of policymakers, financial leaders, business representatives and civil society actors at the EIB Group Forum 2026, held from 3 to 5 March at the headquarters of the European Investment Bank (EIB) in Luxembourg. The annual forum brought together key stakeholders to discuss Europe's investment priorities in a rapidly changing global context. Europa Nostra's participation contributed to ensuring that cultural heritage remains an integral part of Europe's policy and investment agenda. As part of its mission in Luxembourg, Vice-President **Guy Clause**, Secretary General **Sneška Quaedvlieg-Mihailović**, and Advocacy and Partnerships Manager **Vanessa Fraga Prol**, held dedicated exchanges with representatives of the EIB Institute. These meetings also brought together experts involved in the 7 Most Endangered Programme, the flagship initiative run by Europa Nostra with the support of the EIB Institute.

[Read more](#)



Winners of the Costa Carras European Citizens Awards for the Safeguard of Endangered Heritage 2026 unveiled

The 2026 winners of the Costa Carras European Citizens Awards for the Safeguard of Endangered Heritage were announced on 20 March. The Citizens Association of Podbara “Almašani”, an exemplary NGO from Serbia, won the Gold Award for its outstanding work in saving cultural heritage at risk in Serbia (*photo above*). The Jury granted the Silver Award to the Volunteer Cultural Association “#agapameDesylla” for successfully promoting and preserving the endangered cultural and natural heritage of the small village of Desylla, Greece. The Award Ceremony will take place on 22 April within the framework of the Delphi Economic Forum 2026. The Costa Carras European Citizens Awards were established in 2023 by Europa Nostra and Elliniki Etairia, with the support of The A.G. Leventis Foundation, the Delphi Economic Forum and the European Investment Bank Institute.

[Read more](#)



Europa Nostra strengthens ties with Lisbon as Mayor announces the city will host the European Cultural Heritage Summit 2028

On 23 February, Europa Nostra's Secretary General **Sneška Quaedvlieg-Mihailović** participated in a high-level meeting with the Mayor of Lisbon, **Carlos Moedas**, at the Lisbon Town Hall. This meeting reaffirmed the importance of Europa Nostra's longstanding and dynamic relationship with Portugal's capital city — home to the Europa Nostra Heritage Hub in Lisbon coordinated by Centro Nacional de Cultura. Later that day, during the inaugural [In Variedade Concordia Talk "Europe, variations on a theme"](#) held at the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, Mayor Moedas announced that Lisbon will proudly host the European Cultural Heritage Summit 2028, further consolidating the city's central role in shaping Europe's cultural future and underlining the strategic importance of Europa Nostra's continued engagement with Lisbon.

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“Heritage Matters”: Europa Nostra highlights longtime link to Scotland and looks ahead to renewed partnerships during visit to Edinburgh

During a visit to Edinburgh from 16 to 18 March, Europa Nostra’s Secretary General combined high-level dialogue with a series of visits to heritage sites and exchanges with key heritage actors. At the “Heritage Matters” event, organised by the RSA Fellowship in Scotland, **Sneška Quaedvlieg-Mihailović** delivered a keynote address to a wide audience of professionals from the cultural, built environment and policy sectors. She underlined the strong and enduring links between Europa Nostra and the UK, including Scotland’s significant contribution to Europe’s heritage movement. **Robert Aldridge**, Lord Provost of the City of Edinburgh (*photo above*), delivered opening remarks. Our Board was represented by its member **Graham Bell**. Europa Nostra sees a strong potential to strengthen its collaboration and partnerships in Scotland in the near future, in full alignment with Europa Nostra UK based in London.

[Read more](#)

And much more...

Advocating for cultural heritage

- [Building bridges with ICCROM](#)
- [Europa Nostra issues statement on the United States’ withdrawal from ICCROM](#)

Campaigning to save endangered heritage

- [Europa Nostra contributes to Kyiv conference on cultural resilience in times of war](#)
- [European experts renew call for decisive action to preserve the Iron Gate of Antioch in Türkiye](#)

Fostering partnerships across Europe

- [MERITA Platform announces 44 young chamber music ensembles from across Europe in the frame of MERITAcubed](#)

Get involved

- [Participate in Hub's Open Call for In Varietate Concordia opinion articles on culture, heritage and European values](#)
- [Apply for ECTN Awards 2026 'Sustainable Tourism Strategy and Culture Compass for Europe'](#)

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