

The Hague, 19 January 2021

**TO:**

- Minister of Environment and Energy, Mr. Skrekas Kostas - secmin@ypen.gr  
- Alt. Minister of Finance, Dr. Skylakakis Theodoros - deputyminister-secr@minfin.gr

Dear Minister,

Europa Nostra, the European Voice of Civil Society Committed to Cultural Heritage, encourages actions that save and preserve our European Heritage, especially in this challenging period for our society and economy. Recently we have been informed that the Ministry of Environment and Energy adopted the proposal of Syros Institute, concerning a new funding Call for the conservation of private Historic Buildings in Greece, called "PRESERVE" (ΔΙΑΤΗΡΩ). Europa Nostra finds this initiative most exciting and innovative for Greece and the entire European Union and would like to support it.

While Europe and the whole world is experiencing an unprecedented health crisis, with major impacts on the economy and culture, among other sectors, we are called to rethink our way of living and reaffirm our common values. Europa Nostra, as a representative of the [European Heritage Alliance](#) and the wider European cultural community, is convinced that culture and cultural heritage are a cornerstone for the revival and future of Europe.

Therefore, we believe therefore that culture and cultural heritage should duly be highlighted in the Greek national recovery and resilience plan and undeniably, the new funding Call "PRESERVE" fully incorporates this European spirit for sustainable development for an environmental and economic revival through culture and cultural heritage.

This Call will be beneficial not only for heritage but mainly for the economy, both at local and national levels. It is proven that any investment in cultural heritage has multiple positive repercussions on the economy, growth and development. Europa Nostra has advocated in favour of this argument in the [European Heritage Alliance Manifesto 'Cultural Heritage: a powerful catalyst for the future of Europe'](#), which puts forward 7 tangible ways in which cultural heritage can act as a catalyst for positive change for Europe's immediate socioeconomic recovery. We believe hence that a specialised funding tool that aims to restore historic buildings in traditional settlements and historic centres of cities like Athens, Thessaloniki or Piraeus, can be useful in many ways: owners will get the chance to exploit their buildings, the construction industry will open more jobs, cities and settlements will preserve their physiognomy, real estate interests will increase, and many areas will become more attractive for tourism. The huge potential of heritage-led regeneration in historic cities, villages and the countryside across Europe can indeed become a real 'game-changer' also towards a greener and more sustainable Europe. "PRESERVE" is therefore a call that could be reproduced in many EU countries, as a pioneer project that gives the chance to regenerate private historic buildings in a mass scale and help them to become resilient in times of rapid changes.

For the reasons mentioned above, Europa Nostra strongly supports the Greek initiative of "PRESERVE" (ΔΙΑΤΗΡΩ) and would be extremely pleased if the Greek government would consider it with a positive approach, as it encompasses potentially positive outcomes for the local economy and an inspiration for other EU governments to implement this model in their respective policies.

Sincerely yours,



Sneška Quaedvlieg-Mihailović  
Secretary General



EUROPA  
NOSTRA

The European Voice of  
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to Cultural Heritage

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