



ΔΕΛΤΙΟ ΤΥΠΟΥ
Embargoed 08/04/2021, 11:30 CET

Five Southern Aegean Islands listed among the 7 Most Endangered heritage sites in Europe for 2021

The Hague / Brussels / Luxembourg, 8 April 2021

Europa Nostra - the European voice of civil society committed to cultural and natural heritage – together with its partner, the European Investment Bank Institute, this morning announced **the List of 7 Most Endangered monuments and heritage sites in Europe for 2021:**

- [Five Southern Aegean Islands, GREECE](#)
- [Achensee Steam Cog Railway, Tyrol, AUSTRIA](#)
- [Cemetery Complex of Mirogoj, Zagreb, CROATIA](#)
- [The Giusti Garden, Verona, ITALY](#)
- [Dečani Monastery, KOSOVO*](#)
- [Central Post Office in Skopje, NORTH MACEDONIA](#)
- [San Juan de Socueva Chapel and Hermitage, Cantabria, SPAIN](#)

The announcement of the 7 Most Endangered sites 2021 was made at an online event co-hosted by high level representatives from Europa Nostra and the European Investment Bank Institute, with the participation of **Mariya Gabriel**, European Commissioner for Innovation, Research, Culture, Education and Youth. Nominators and representatives of the 7 selected sites contributed to the webinar, which attracted participants from across Europe and beyond.

Speaking at the online event, **Guy Clausee**, Executive Vice President of Europa Nostra, emphasised: *“The aim of our 7 Most Endangered List 2021 is to ring the alarm bell about the serious threats which these sites are facing. From an outstanding medieval monastery to a remarkable Renaissance garden, from industrial and modern constructions to iconic cultural landscapes: these sites are important testimonies of our shared past, memory and identity. At a time when our continent is experiencing an unprecedented crisis, Europa Nostra wishes to express its solidarity and lend its support to local communities across Europe who are determined to save these endangered heritage treasures. Through our wide pan-European network of members and partners, we will mobilise diverse expertise and resources to help save these heritage sites, which should be recognised as powerful vectors of sustainable development as well as vital tools for peace and dialogue between various communities. Together, we can do it!”*

Francisco de Paula Coelho, Dean of the European Investment Bank Institute, stated: *“Once again, the EIB Institute is standing side by side with Europa Nostra, our long time partner in safeguarding European cultural heritage sites in danger. Europeans take pride in cultural heritage. It brings them together. For the EU Bank it is only natural to help strengthen this link through our support and commitment to the now yearly 7 Most Endangered Programme”.*

Reacting to the announcement of the 7 Most Endangered sites 2021, **Mariya Gabriel**, European Commissioner for Innovation, Research, Culture, Education and Youth, said: *“Europe’s cultural heritage is our past, present*

and future. It is part of our identity and brings people from across our continent together around shared values and experiences. It is precious and deserves our utmost attention and protection. Through the 7 Most Endangered Programme, we put the spotlight on European heritage in peril, raising awareness and paving the way for a viable future for the selected sites.”

The 7 Most Endangered sites for 2021 were selected by the [Board of Europa Nostra](#) from the [12 sites shortlisted](#) by a [panel of international experts](#). The **selection** was made on the basis of the outstanding heritage significance and cultural value of each of the sites as well as on the basis of the serious danger that they are facing. The level of engagement of local communities and the commitment of public and private stakeholders to saving these sites were considered as crucial added values. Another selection criterion was the potential of these sites to act as a catalyst for sustainable socio-economic development as well as a tool for promoting peace and dialogue within their localities and wider regions.

The selected 7 Most Endangered heritage sites are eligible for an **EIB Heritage Grant of up to €10,000 per site**. The EIB Heritage Grant can be allocated to the eligible selected 7 Most Endangered sites to assist in implementing an agreed activity that will contribute to saving the threatened site.

Teams of experts representing Europa Nostra and the European Investment Bank Institute, together with the organisations that nominated the sites and other partners, will assess each case by collecting information and by meeting with key stakeholders. These multidisciplinary teams will provide expert advice, identify possible sources of funding and help mobilise wide support to save these heritage landmarks. At the end of the assessment process, they will formulate and communicate a set of recommendations for future action.

The [7 Most Endangered Programme](#) is run by [Europa Nostra](#) in partnership with the [European Investment Bank Institute](#). It also has the support of the Creative Europe programme of the European Union. Launched in 2013, this programme forms part of a civil society campaign to save Europe's endangered heritage. It raises awareness, prepares independent assessments and proposes recommendations for action. It also provides a symbolic grant of €10,000 per listed site. The listing of an endangered site often serves as a catalyst and incentive for the mobilisation of necessary public or private support, including funding.

Five Southern Aegean Islands, GREECE

The islands of Amorgos, Kimolos, Kithira, Sikinos and Tinos share the landscape and cultural wealth of the Cyclades which give them an incomparable environmental value. These iconic landscapes, which form a vital part of Greek but also European identity, feature harmonious coexistence between the Aegean Sea, hills, mountains, traditional settlements, monuments and archaeological sites.

These multi-layered landscapes are in grave danger due to proposals for the installation of numerous wind turbines in different parts of each island, often next to with archaeological sites, some within protected [Natura 2000](#) areas or as a backdrop to traditional villages. The turbines proposed vastly exceed the islands' actual needs and are meant to outsource energy to other Greek locations. The wind turbines will not only visually impact the islands' landscapes but they will have effects on their morphology and climate, endangering both their flora and fauna and, consequently, the agricultural, livestock and touristic sectors of their economies. Undoubtedly, this will diminish the landscape's environmental and cultural value and place the livelihood of local communities at risk.

A [study](#) recently published by the University of Ioannina demonstrates that Greece can meet her EU target for the installation of renewable energy systems without any further permit for wind turbines in nature preservation areas. **Elliniki Etairia «Society for the Environment and Cultural Heritage»** submitted a proposal to exclude nature preservation areas from the wind turbine programme to the Greek Ministry of Environment and Energy.

Elliniki Etairia, Europa Nostra's country representation in Greece, has nominated these Five Southern Aegean Islands for the 7 Most Endangered Programme 2021. Elliniki Etairia has fought for a sustainable lifestyle using renewable energy since 1972. However, in the case of these Five Southern Aegean Islands, we seek for alternative and balanced clean-energy solutions rather than wind parks, together with an in-depth consultation process with local communities and experts. ELLINIKI ETAIRIA has recently been contacted by many other community groups and municipalities requesting similar advice and support.

The siting of renewable energy infrastructure in (protected) cultural landscapes is among the potential conflicts between heritage safeguarding and European Green Deal action identified in the recently launched **European Cultural Heritage Green Paper "Putting Europe's shared heritage at the heart of the European Green Deal"**. This Paper reflects our firm conviction that, in the case of such tensions, 'win-win' scenarios are both desirable and attainable on the basis of a proper consultation process with local communities and heritage experts.

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www.7mostendangered.eu

www.europanostra.org

<http://institute.eib.org>

<https://www.ellet.gr/en/>

Background information

Europa Nostra is the European voice of civil society committed to safeguarding and promoting cultural and natural heritage. A pan-European federation of heritage NGOs, supported by a wide network of public bodies, private companies and individuals, it covers more than 40 countries. Founded in 1963, it is today recognised as the largest and the most representative heritage network in Europe.

Europa Nostra campaigns to save Europe's endangered monuments, sites and landscapes, in particular through the 7 Most Endangered Programme. It celebrates excellence through the European Heritage Awards / Europa Nostra Awards. Europa Nostra actively contributes to the definition and implementation of European strategies and policies related to heritage, through a participatory dialogue with European Institutions and the coordination of the European Heritage Alliance.

The European Investment Bank Institute (EIB-I) was set up within the EIB Group (European Investment Bank and European Investment Fund) to promote and support social, cultural, and academic initiatives with European stakeholders and the public at large. It is a key pillar of the EIB Group's community and citizenship engagement. More information on <http://institute.eib.org>

Creative Europe is the EU programme that supports the cultural and creative sectors, enabling them to increase their contribution to jobs and growth. With a budget of €1.46 billion for 2014-2020, it supports organisations in the fields of heritage, performing arts, fine arts, interdisciplinary arts, publishing, film, TV, music, and video games as well as tens of thousands of artists, cultural and audiovisual professionals. The funding allows them to operate across Europe, to reach new audiences and to develop the skills required in the digital age.