



2017 ANNUAL MEETING IN REYKJAVIK / 7<sup>th</sup> - 9<sup>th</sup> JUNE

**“Our Common Heritage – Sharing the Responsibility”**

# ICELAND

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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In 2017, the 12<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the EHHF took place in Reykjavik – Iceland, from Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> until Friday 9<sup>th</sup> June. It gathered 46 participants, including six speakers from international organizations (Council of Europe, European Commission, ICCROM, Europa Nostra, European Archaeological Council and Gaia Heritage) and three guests from Iceland (University of Iceland, ICOMOS Iceland and a freelance archaeologist). 23 countries were represented in total. The forum opened with a guided visit of Harpa, followed by an informal reception on the Wednesday evening.

**Host:** The Cultural Heritage Agency of Iceland

**Venue:** Harpa, Reykjavik Concert Hall & Conference Centre.

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The relative documents (participants list, powerpoints and presentations) are available on the [EHHF website](#) and upon request from the EHHF Permanent Secretariat, which of course remains at your entire disposal.

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Director General Kristín Huld Sigurðardóttir (Cultural Heritage Agency of Iceland) welcomed her guests with a reminder about the significance of Cultural Heritage in our society. She thanked all the participants, Heads, delegates and representatives of the European heritage for coming to Iceland and contributing to a unique exchange of experiences.

The Icelandic Minister of Education, Science and Culture, Mr. Kristján Þór Júlíusson, then opened the meeting. He wished to remind "how cultural heritage determines who we are, how it preserves our identity and our humanity against international threats and nationalistic discourses". By quoting Antoine de St Exupéry, he brought the participants' attention to the values, the beliefs, the customs and the knowledge that "slowly accumulates in the course of centuries" and on which the civilization relies. The Minister also emphasized the opportunities and synergies that are to be achieved and created with European conventions such as the Faro Convention, and related events such as the [European Year of Cultural Heritage \(2018\)](#). He finally thanked the assembly for getting so deeply involved in the preservation of our common heritage and, as a consequence, in the improvement of the European citizens' quality of life.

Director General Lars Amréus (Swedish National Heritage Board) then took over to chair the first day of the meeting. He began by thanking Director General Sigurðardóttir for inviting him to chair such an interesting debate, as he was "delighted to meet everyone again in Harpa". Before introducing the first speaker, Mr. Amréus stressed that in a changing European society it is important that all citizens, irrespective of background, can relate to a diverse cultural heritage – and explore the multitudes of histories and identities that have shaped Europe. He also underlined that, as civil servants, we have the responsibility to ensure that cultural heritage management supports an open and inclusive society. The fact that cultural heritage management is seen as an intersectoral issue is crucial for its success. Cultural heritage management needs to be performed by a wide range of stakeholders and competencies. New ideas, collaborations and networks can emerge from this meeting of traditional cultural heritage agencies and authorities within other policy areas.

#### KEYNOTES PART I – The Contribution of Cultural Heritage to Society

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Mr. Georges Zouain, founder of [Gaia Heritage](#), was invited by the Cultural Heritage Agency of Iceland to open the session with a presentation under the theme "The Contribution of Cultural Heritage to Society". Mr. Zouain first raised a few questions, with an avowed aim of questioning the relevance of the listing process and the validity of the contribution of heritage to the society. He therefore brought the following questions, trying to propose elements of response: How and when is the protection of cultural heritage ethical? For whom are we protecting? Is cultural heritage a public good or is it publicly funded for it is a "merit good" – knowing that it is not a social good as health, security or justice can be –? How just is the model of cultural heritage protection as the list of protected good is expanding? Mr. Zouain attempted to put the contribution of cultural heritage to the test of ethics and economy.

Analyzing the ethical aspects of cultural heritage listing, Mr. Zouain reminded the writings of Aristotle – especially from “Nicomachean Ethics” – by saying that the listing of a cultural good depends on several individuals who often have opposite functions and interests. If, from a scientific point of view, a good might deserve being listed, he also might be rejected by the politician or the decision maker for political reasons. Who is right and what is the best choice for society? The contribution of cultural heritage does concern a lot of stakeholders who benefit more or less directly from the presence and the uses of cultural heritage (CH). CH is becoming an industry which provides eventually a lot to society economically, but it continues operating with the same tools that have become obsolete, and it is still insufficiently checked by data.

Mr. Zouain also raised the question of values and more particularly towards the social significance of CH in the eyes of the Welfare State. But as data and research is still lacking to prove and define the effective contribution of CH to society, public funding will remain unthinkable for liberal economists. According to the founder of Gaia Heritage, there is a need to ensure that the decisions are taken by the right people, and in our situation, this implies a need for alternative solutions and integrated approaches. We cannot add something on a list of protected buildings according to the demands of touristic development. We cannot determine the economic value of CH without protecting its inherent value. Unfortunately, those initial values are often considered hinder evolution compared to use values and economic potential. As a conclusion, Mr. Zouain questioned the sustainability of the current shared approach on managing CH, especially regarding the Welfare State, the growing restrictions and constraints on public funding and the increasing of protected sites and monuments. Even though he did not want to show too much pessimism, he reminded everyone to be careful about the very definition of CH, as it seems to become more and more an umbrella term.

## KEYNOTES PART II – Society in Transition

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“The question is not if cultural heritage is contributing to the society, but how.”

Lars Amréus

- Dr. Pavol Ižvolt, scientific coordinator for the Monuments Board of the Slovak Republic, introduced this new session with a presentation untitled “Cultural Heritage for Transition Times? Experiences from Slovakia”. Dr. Ižvolt started by reminding the assistance about the history of Slovakia, which is part of the countries that had to deal with a lot of societal changes in the XXth century. The transition was fast after the fall of the USSR, with a lot of rural heritage. Lots of sites and monuments had been abandoned or built over with new infrastructure. The Jewish heritage being one of the most visible examples, with synagogues used as cinemas, etc. Slovakia therefore decided to enforce an integrated approach for the restoration of monuments, based on several study cases and comparisons of models. The objective was to define systems that could also ensure positive impacts on society. Two innovative models were then developed, the first one as a unique model of conservation for castles ruins with the help of unemployed people. This model has been based on a collaboration between NGOs, Ministries and the EU. The second model, [Pro Monumenta](#), focuses on the creation of maintenance systems for conservation, on technical diagnostics and on the monitoring of built heritage in close collaboration with owners and managers. It has been inspired by the Dutch system of preventive maintenance –

[Monumentenwacht](#). This project was, in its initial stage, supported by the [EEA Financial Mechanism](#) and partners with the Norwegian Directorate for Cultural Heritage.

- Ma. Sólrún Inga Traustadóttir, independent archaeologist, introduced to the assembly her presentation entitled “Communicating archaeology – In the search for the right platform”, presenting the results of a project she led towards schools and younger generations to discover archaeology in Iceland. The humble turf houses being a “sign of poverty, barbarism and backwardness”, a majority of the people seems to underestimate the importance and the significance of archaeology in Iceland. Educational projects have therefore been initiated at school, with help from many private and state institutions and in partnership with the [Reykjavik City Museum](#), as well as some other municipalities. The aim is undeniably to raise awareness and inform the public through workshops, excavation classes and a detailed process implying participation, discovery, cataloguing, interpreting and presenting.
- Dr. Hulda Þórisdóttir, Associate Professor at the University of Iceland, then presented the results from studies within social psychology under the heading of “Why is it not enough to tell them it is important? On changing attitudes and behaviours”. By questioning the role of attitudes in the determination of behavior, Dr. Þórisdóttir pointed out some communicational approximations that usually lead to misunderstanding. For instance, she reminded that social norms “can backfire if you are not careful with them”, meaning that an individual would more likely follow what others usually do, instead of following your advice not to. Communicating about heritage and archaeology must be done carefully, remembering that “how one persuade depends on how interested people are”. Dr. Þórisdóttir finished her presentation by introducing the concept of “nudging” (using behavioral science to help people behave according to their own self-interest by making it easy, attractive, social and timely). As an example, she presented the idea of a line on the floor to make people take the stairs instead of the elevator. A source of inspiration for communication campaigns about heritage and its preservation.

#### INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS – Exchange and discussion

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- Mr. Eladio Fernandez-Galiano, Head of the Culture, Nature and Heritage Department of the [Council of Europe](#), opened this session dedicated to the invited international organizations. He first expressed his wish to bring some optimism back in the debate, reminding everyone that cultural heritage has been quite “trendy” in the last years, valued by the public and truly considered as a strong support for a sustainable development by the EU. Cultural heritage conventions, such as the [Strategy XXI](#), will help bringing together all the good will from every member-countries. Finally, Mr. Fernandez-Galiano mentioned the link between climate change and CH, as a lot of sites and monuments might be endangered and damaged by the changes to come. He announced that a meeting would soon be set to take climate change into account in the transition strategies.
- [European Commission](#) Policy Officer Mrs. Erminia Sciacchitano (Directorate for Education and Culture), started her presentation by inviting to celebrate the enter in force on 9<sup>th</sup> June of the legal basis of the European Year of Cultural Heritage 2018. Cultural heritage is also one of the three pillars of the new strategy on the external relations of the EU. Transnational projects

supported by [Creative Europe](#) and other EU programs, numerous events and a wide communication campaign (#EuropeForCulture) are already being enforced to encourage sharing and appreciation of Europe's heritage, to raise awareness about our common history and values, and to reinforce a sense of belonging to a common European space. "The key message of the Commission is that CH is not only a legacy from the past, it is also a resource for the future". Mrs. Sciacchitano also reminded that management at national level is coordinated by national coordinators. The first meeting was held on 25<sup>th</sup> April. At the EU level, the year will be a joint initiative of all EU institutions (all Commission's Directorates General, coordinated by the DG Education and Culture, European Parliament, Council of the EU, Committee of the Regions), supported by multipliers (Creative Europe desks, representations of the EU Commission and European Parliament). A committee has been set with 35 representative organizations from civil society, CH professionals and stakeholders. For more information, please contact [EAC-EYCH2018@ec.europa.eu](mailto:EAC-EYCH2018@ec.europa.eu).

- Sneska Quaedvlieg-Mihailovic, Secretary General of [Europa Nostra](#), then reported the latest evolutions for the well-known "Voice of the Civil Society" in Europe, with a focus on the last Symposium in Turku – Finland (May 2017). She also presented Europa Nostra's activities planned for the European Year of Cultural Heritage, such as the special edition of the EU Prize for Cultural Heritage / Europa Nostra Awards, in 2018, for which the Awards Juries will give "special attention to any European dimension in a project" (see [call for applications](#), open until October 1<sup>st</sup> 2017). Mrs. Quaedvlieg-Mihailovic also invited all the Heads and representatives to the European Heritage Summit which will take place in Berlin in 2018. Having held preparatory meetings with the Summit hosts and key partners, Europa Nostra's Secretary General stressed the importance of such collaboration between civil society organisations and public institutions for the success of the European Year as a whole. She finally emphasized the importance of cultural diplomacy and the need to use it in a more powerful way to create a real European Heritage Agenda for cultural heritage.

- Stefano de Caro, Director General of [ICCROM](#), and Barney Sloane, Vice-President of the [European Archaeological Council](#) (EAC), closed the morning session by presenting the latest conclusions and priorities that had been discussed in their respective organizations. Mr. Sloane took this opportunity to announce the next EAC Symposium in Bulgaria in 2018, after the last one in Athens (March 2017). He also presented some of the conclusions of the Athens meeting and invited everyone to look for the reports on the EAC website (see link above). He finally insisted on the importance of national research frameworks which are of great interest for the managers in archaeological projects. Director General Stefano de Caro, on the other hand, emphasized the need for a better cooperation between countries and the role that digital could play in such projects. The exchange of information within the cultural heritage sector must be improved and new technologies seem to be able to answer this challenge, if stakeholders are willing to.

Finally, a wider conclusion came up with a focus on the EYCH 2018 and the need for both a trans-sectorial and trans-national approach. It was reminded that the EYCH and the Cultural Heritage Summit (Berlin 2018) were addressed to everyone, public and private, in the objective of building more and more bridges between people and initiatives from all around Europe.

### 1. Preservation and research under the pressure of development

Moderator: Irene Hadjisavva (Cyprus)

"We live in a context where politicians and sometimes developers or architects seem to be more sensitive to the investors' needs and less to heritage values. More than ever, there is a need for a constructive dialogue between the heritage professionals and developers, planning authorities and lastly, but very importantly, politicians. In order to engage in a fruitful dialogue, it is important that heritage agencies learn the language of others and broaden their expertise in competencies beyond heritage. Another important aspect is "time". This precious asset that we have that *is* negotiable. How? It has different value for developers and technocrats. For the first it means profit lost and capital trapped, while for the latter is just a commodity. So, we could negotiate it to obtain a result that is closer to an equilibrium between profit, heritage value and social justice. The dialogue thus needs to articulate between research, education, legislation and regulations, interpersonal skills, new competences, and why not, nudge!"

### 2. Reaching out to the public

Moderator: Duncan Wilson (UK - England)

"Heritage is about people. The need is growing now to listen more to the public and hear what they think. We need to fill the gap, to build bridges and reaching out to people from every cultural inheritance may surely help in this process. Engage with the people, involve them by relating heritage to their everyday lives, use the volunteering sector when possible and reaching out to the young generation through education, those are the keys to a new dialogue which would not automatically go through expert groups, as usual. The objective is not only to present facts anymore, but also the stories behind them, stories from different cultures, embedded in different areas' history, to engage with people and their communities."

### 3. European Year of Cultural Heritage 2018

Moderator: Uwe Koch (Germany)

"EYCH is a very important opportunity to make people understand the bridges between cultures, it is also a starting point to focus on the role of Cultural Heritage in EU policies. Trans-national initiatives therefore need to be highlighted. In addition to the national activities we need trans-national, trans-boundary and European formats to make the common and the connecting dimensions of our cultural heritage more visible. Bottom-up should also be increased by activating people with brainstorming, by using storytelling (especially on the internet and social media) and by involving the daily life (food and drinks are a good example for that). For all those reasons, EYCH is a great opportunity to engage a strong message. The EHHF should use next year to celebrate the diversity of European cultural heritage and confirm its significance in society."

## PLENARY SESSION

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The EHHF annual plenary session started with the reports from the two standing committees: the European Heritage Legal Forum (EHLF) and the Economic Task Force. Further information is available in the 2016 EHHF Annual Report and on the [website](#).

Wolfgang Karl Göhner (Germany, delegate), chairman of the EHLF, first stated about the never-ending changes that impact heritage professionals' work. He also pointed out that there was no potential legal threats on heritage at the European level for the moment and that the EHLF was going through a waiting period with a lot of reading and updating. Mr. Göhner also brought to the Heads' attention a possible development in the EHLF role. Does it need to stay in the framework of "watchdogs"? The EYCH could be a really good chance to work more further into a comparison of legislations in European countries and in the past, to see how they evolved and how decisions were made. This idea was welcome by the Heads.

Terje Nypan (Norway, delegate), chairman of the Economic Task Force, started by reporting the committee's activity during for the last period. The Task Force gathered twice since the previous forum and sent two [ESPON](#) applications for a [targeted analysis](#), which was finally accepted in March 2017 under the name "Material cultural heritage as a strategic territorial development resource: mapping impacts through a set of common European socio-economic indicators". This project aims to look for both theoretical and operational statistics to systematically collect heritage data based on yearly updated official statistics. Mr. Nypan also reported about the memberships and the unequal participation among member-countries in the Economic Task Force. Finally, Sonja Vanblaere (Head of Flanders Heritage – Belgium), warmly thanked Mr. Nypan for his great input in the work of the Task Force and for the steering of the committee. He will now hand over the chairmanship to Mrs. Christine Vanhoutte (Flanders – Belgium, delegate), while keeping the leading for the ESPON project.

## NEWS FROM THE HEADS

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- Cees Van 't Veen (The Netherlands), opened the News from the Heads session with an information on public-private-civic partnerships and the process of redevelopment and design, in the Netherlands. He first reminded the assembly about the challenges that are faced nowadays, such as the attractiveness of a city like Amsterdam, with more than 6 million visitors in a year, or the re-use of buildings and the people involved in this process. As the urban visionary Jane Jacobs used to say in the early sixties: "Cities are not about buildings, they're about people" (...) and: "New ideas occur in old buildings". Mr. Van 't Veen also strongly recommended the documentary called "Citizen Jane: Battle for the city". In dealing with heritage and adaptive reuse assignments, the Dutch think an integrated approach is key. This means close collaboration between public and private parties, and also a high degree of civic involvement. The so-called Dutch Approach therefore articulates three dimensions: 1. the transformation process, a combination of cultural preservation and creativity that comes with the concept of a new culture is

often the most successful; 2. the emancipation of the civil society; 3. the search for alternative forms of financing. Finally, Mr. Van 't Veen invited the other Heads to discover a publication called "Reuse, Redevelop and Design. How the Dutch Deal With Heritage" and announced that Iceland would be his last EHHF meeting as the Head of the Cultural Heritage Agency of the Netherlands.

After Mr. Van 't Veen informed that this was the last EHHF-meeting he would be attending, the whole assembly warmly thanked him for his interesting presentation and most of all for his very inspirational work during the last nine years. A wish to discuss further the theme of re-use and the involvement of the civil society in this process has been expressed by a majority of the Heads.

- Joern Holme (Norway), then reported about Norway's input in terms of entrepreneurship, heritage and cooperation through the [EEA Grants](#) program. He reminded us about the current projects and the strong initial interest and care about heritage shared by the countries involved and supported in the process, such as Slovakia (cf. presentation from Mr. Pavol Ižvolt). Mr. Holme also announced Norway's candidacy to the [UNESCO World Heritage Committee](#) for the period 2017-2021, with a focus on integrated approaches and on disaster and conflict management, to make the nomination process of listed sites more constructive.

- Lars Amréus (Sweden), presented the new responsibilities of the National Heritage Board in respect to the introduction of Sweden's first ever specific government bill on cultural heritage. The bill stipulated new responsibilities, a wider remit and an increased budget for the Swedish National Heritage Board. The new responsibilities include a remit for all museums and a coordinating role for digitization, including digital preservation and communication across the entire cultural heritage sector, including archives, museums, libraries. Finally, Mr. Amréus emphasized the international aspects of those new responsibilities and the wish to create more connections and new cooperations.

- Oliver Martin (Switzerland) announced a ministerial conference about the "culture of the built" and taking place in Davos, right before the beginning of the annual meeting of the World Economic Forum on 20-22 January 2018. This conference shall propose to strengthen the concept of "culture of the built" in a global vision, to understand what is built as a whole – which plays an important role in our daily environment – and avoid the distinction between the built and the heritage. A link would of course be made with the World Economic Forum, which offered to continue the discussion and create a panel to deepen this cultural approach. Official invitations have been sent via embassies in June 2017, following the usual diplomatic ways. The website for the conference is: [www.davosdeclaration2018.ch](http://www.davosdeclaration2018.ch).

- Finally, Siim Raie (Estonia), reminded everyone that Estonia is taking over the Presidency of the Council of the EU for the second half of 2017. He announced an upcoming heritage dedicated meeting in Estonia, which would feature digitalization as one of the main topics. Also, Mr. Raie's administration is getting prepared for a new heritage act. He therefore invited all the other Heads to share experiences and declared that he might contact some of them for advices. The Estonian Register of National Monuments will also be reshaped on this occasion.

**13<sup>th</sup> EHHF ANNUAL MEETING IN LUXEMBOURG, 16-18 MAY 2018**

Director General Kristín Huld Sigurðardóttir, the Cultural Heritage Agency of Iceland and the EHHF Permanent Secretariat were thanked for the organization of the 12<sup>th</sup> EHHF Annual Meeting, which displayed “a lot of generosity and humanity” as Mr. Patrick Sanavia (Luxembourg), hosting head for the next edition, said. Mr. Sanavia also thanked Switzerland and Mr. Oliver Martin for their input in the Troika for the last three years, before announcing the dates for the next annual meeting which will take place in Luxembourg on 16-18 May 2018. “It is an honor to welcome you in our small country from centre of Europe”, he declared.

Finally, the new Troika member was introduced. In 2019, the hosting country for the 14<sup>th</sup> edition of the Forum, will be Sweden, under the direction of Mr. Lars Amréus. Until May 2018, the Troika will therefore be composed of Iceland, Luxembourg and Sweden.