

EUROPEAN HERITAGE DAYS : 25 YEARS

OPEN DOORS – OPEN MINDS



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Culture Programme





EUROPEAN HERITAGE DAYS : 25 YEARS



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*“A joint initiative of
the Council of Europe
and the European Union.”*



FOREWORD

During the past 25 years, the European Heritage Days have evolved into an annual event attracting tens of millions of visitors to an impressive number of monuments and sites, both public and private, spread out across Europe and opened to the general public during a weekend in September. The Days now play an essential role in involving people in culture and heritage.

Despite its overwhelming diversity at close range, Europe shows a surprisingly coherent and beautiful mosaic from a distance. For many people, this European dimension of heritage often eludes them, especially if they only look at individual buildings and specific regions. It is like zooming in on a digital picture - you can see the pixels but not the whole image.

It is therefore a huge accomplishment that over the last 25 years the European Heritage Days have been able to interest people in the “bigger picture”. The pan-European initiative of the European Heritage Days – a joint initiative by the Council of Europe and the European Union – now brings together all the 49 states party to the European Cultural Convention.

It is the history of interlinking cultures, religions and peoples that makes Europe what it is today. This is why heritage becomes a means for mutual understanding between people from all backgrounds, it bridges gaps that may have developed between them and by bringing people together it contributes to a greater social cohesion.

We are very pleased that the European Heritage Days show that interest in heritage is alive and kicking but we must make sure that this interest will not wane in the future.

During the European Heritage Forum 2009 we looked at new ways of using the Internet, film and television, to increase the access to our heritage.

Heritage is one of Europe’s great assets. And it needs to be protected, not just from damage directly caused by people, but also from new risks such as climate change which call for robust efforts from us all.

In a time of financial crisis it is good to remember that investing in heritage contributes to the

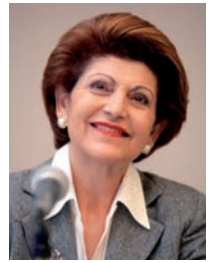
regeneration of cities and regions that risk lagging behind and that such investments create new jobs, not just in the heritage sector itself but also in other sectors.

The European Heritage Days play a role, not only in opening up cultural heritage to people across Europe, but also in opening up minds about our heritage.

And at the same time, about each other. ■



Thorbjørn Jagland
*Secretary General
Council of Europe*



Androulla Vassiliou
*Commissioner for Education,
Culture, Multilingualism
and Youth
European Union*

“To encourage European citizens to become aware of their cultural wealth, to achieve better mutual recognition and greater understanding of cultural diversity and to safeguard and promote a heritage which, by virtue of its definition, is at risk.”



25 YEARS
OF EUROPEAN
HERITAGE DAYS



INTRODUCTION

When the idea of the European Heritage Days (EHD) came into being in 1985, Europe showed a far different social, technological, political and even geographical complexion. The Internet was in its infancy; we had yet to hear of mobile phones, DVD players and interactivity or on-line discussion forums. Immigration flows were not on the same scale as today. The Berlin Wall was still standing.

The idea of the European Heritage Days was conceived on 3 October 1985 during the Second Conference of European Ministers responsible for Architectural Heritage, organised

by the Council of Europe in Granada (Spain). That was when Jack Lang, then French Minister of Culture, suggested extending a successful initiative launched in France the year before in 1984, the Journées Portes Ouvertes, a special opening of monuments normally closed to the public to the rest of Europe. This event dedicated to heritage was to become a great success in Europe. All 49 states which have signed the European Cultural Convention take part in the event, making treasures of cultural heritage accessible to tens of millions of people during the European Heritage Days.

After a quarter of a century, the time has come to celebrate the successes of the European Heritage Days, and to face the challenges the programme faces. Our European “Unity in Diversity” is more important than ever as identities are evolving and younger generations’ interest in heritage needs to be sparked if it is to flourish. It is not enough to repeat what has been tried and tested before. We have to re-interpret the relevance of European cultural heritage, and “we” means people from all over Europe, including young people and people who migrated to Europe.

The principles of the European Heritage Days, to encourage European citizens to become aware of their cultural wealth, to achieve better mutual recognition and greater understanding of cultural diversity and to safeguard and promote a heritage which, by virtue of its definition, is at risk, is even more important today than it was 25 years ago.

This brochure will not only look back on some of the achievements of past 25 years, but will also give a glimpse of the future. ■

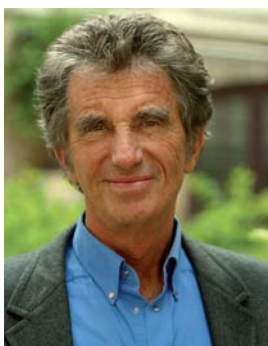
“It’s a wonderful feeling to have started something that has become so important for millions of people in so many countries today.”



25 YEARS ON



Interview with Jack Lang, *Minister of Culture (1981-1986)*



Did you expect that the European Heritage Days would still be alive 25 years after you came up with the idea?

When I suggested the idea of the Days in Granada, in 1985, I was French Minister of Culture. I hoped that a few countries would go along with it. The concept was simple and appealing: to invite people to come and look behind the doors and windows of monuments, harnessing curiosity to discover history and heritage. Nothing stuffy or official... Simply an experience for everyone to enjoy. It’s a wonderful feeling to have started something that has become so important for millions of people in so many countries today.

What is the most important thing that the European Heritage Days have to offer present-day Europe?

The European Heritage Days are essential in that they provide the possibility of talking about history with friends and family, about how things used to be and how they might be in the future. Europe is a colourful backdrop against which civilisations and cultures have clashed sometimes violently through the centuries. Cultural heritage helps us understand the complexities of our history, but also shows its continuity. Some conflicts have been forgotten with time. In other cases, memories are vivid and emotions raw. I am convinced by my

own experience that this constant coming to terms with our past is vital to the European spirit as a whole.

Are there any fields that cause you particular anxiety?

There are several matters of concern to me. Cultural heritage has often been misused as an instrument for division and exclusion. It is easy to open old wounds and rewrite history when Europeans know next to nothing of the cultural heritage that surrounds them. Hence the vital importance of reaching and teaching new generations and new citizens, in order to promote openness and discussion. My other worry is about Eastern

Europe. The cultural heritage of these regions can contribute to sustainable economic and democratic development, but has suffered from many years of neglect.

What of the future?

I should like to issue a challenge, to raise new and daring questions about cultural heritage and make use of technical innovations wherever possible to reach and activate new groups, particularly young people. Unless our cultural heritage has more relevance for new generations of Europeans, our monuments stand no chance of survival.

A final word of wisdom?

The young generations are able to communicate with each other more rapidly than ever before. Borders are losing importance. Conversely, questions of multiple identity and affiliation are increasingly important. Cultural heritage is a central part of this development. The new generations will reinterpret and rediscover our history in their own way. And if I may offer a word of wisdom ... this is nothing else but a good thing! ■

“The European Heritage Days were an immediate success, the outcome of unprecedented co-operation between governmental institutions, NGOs, associations, voluntary organisations and individual owners of monuments across Europe.”



EARLY PROGRESS 1984 - 1994

After the launching of the concept at the Second Conference of European Ministers responsible for Architectural Heritage and the experiment conducted in France, the scheme was embraced by the Netherlands in 1987 via “Open Monumentendag”. The Committee for Cultural Heritage of the Council of Europe saw potential there for more European countries, and organised an international gathering in 1989 in the Netherlands to devise the plan. The programme conceived during that meeting was to be further developed by the Council of Europe and the foundation “Nederlandse Stichting Open Monumentendag”.

The European Heritage Days (EHD) are founded on the principle of making European cultural heritage more accessible to the general public. The idea was that if people became more aware of their European identity, not just culturally but also socially, politically and economically, Europe could become a meeting place with space for mutual recognition and acceptance of differences.

A co-ordinating office was set up on the premises of the foundation *Nederlandse Stichting Open Monumentendag*. In 1991 in Gouda (Netherlands), the first official opening of the European Heritage Days took place, focusing on a series of essential principles:

- The EHD enable the general public to visit monuments and sites all over Europe which are usually closed;

- The European Heritage Days take place during a weekend in September;
- Buildings normally open all year round can be included in the programme, provided that they offer specific EHD activities such as guided tours, exhibitions, concerts or lectures;
- The visits should be free of charge or offered at a reduced rate;
- The programme of the European Heritage Days should include the organisation of specific activities involving the general public and, in particular, young people and pupils;
- Participating countries are asked to use the official title “European Heritage Days”, and the logo should appear on all European Heritage Days promotional material;

- All participating countries are asked to use the slogan “Europe, a common heritage” (adopted since the European Heritage Days of 1999);
- The European Heritage Days’ flag should be flown from all buildings open to the public during the event.

The European Heritage Days were an immediate success, the outcome of unprecedented co-operation between governmental institutions, NGOs, associations, voluntary organisations and individual owners of monuments across Europe.

France (1984) and the Netherlands (1987) were soon followed by Sweden (1988), Malta (1988), Belgium (1989) and Turkey (1990). In 1991, the United Kingdom, Ireland and Germany became interested in the idea and joined in. In all, nine countries

participated in the first European Heritage Days in 1991. In 1992, the number had risen to 18 and, in 1993, to 24. Today, 49 countries participate and a European network of EHD National Co-ordinators has been established. The Co-ordination Office moved from the Netherlands in 1994 when the Belgian *Fondation Roi Baudouin* took over this task. A new era of expansion, consolidation, experiments and growing co-operation among the national co-ordinators began. ■



“The operation is no longer simply a matter of just opening doors; it is accompanied by a variety of activities including guided tours, exhibitions, dedicated websites and brochures.”

The International Heritage Photographic Experience

Originating in the context of the EHD, **the International Heritage Photographic Experience (IHPE/EPIM)** epitomises the true ideal of the European Heritage Days by associating cross-border activities and involving young people. This worthwhile experience supported by the authorities of Catalonia (Spain) targets schools and invites young people (secondary school pupils) to present personal statements in photographs on cultural heritage. It has gradually spread to other continents. To quote co-ordinator Esteve Mach i Bosch: “The young people who participated are showing us the cultural and natural heritage as they see it, and their creativity stimulates ours and invites us to experience this heritage in a new way, a way that is entertaining, with the power and connotations of a personal experience.” Over 200 000 young people have taken part to date. Each country sends photographs accompanied by an extract of a national representative’s commentary. In 2008, the project won a European Union Prize for Cultural Heritage/Europa Nostra Awards.

DEVELOPMENT AND ACHIEVEMENTS 1994 - 2008

Since 1999, the European Heritage Days have been a joint action of the Council of Europe and the European Commission. Under the auspices of the Council of Europe, the King Baudouin Foundation (Belgium) ran the EHD co-ordinating office for seven years until this role was taken over by the Centro Nacional de Cultura in Portugal and subsequently, between 2005 and 2007, by Europa Nostra, the pan-European Federation for Cultural Heritage working from its offices in the Netherlands.

The Co-ordination Office acts as a catalyst for initiatives emerging from all parts of Europe. In September, the official opening of the European Heritage Days is held at successive venues in Europe, and subsequently there is a separate meeting for all the National Co-ordinators. The office prompts new countries to join the initiative, it promotes the European Heritage Days in the media, and encourages international initiatives

and cross-border activities. Besides ensuring liaison between National Co-ordinators, the office monitors and assists the number of participating countries which has grown from 9 in 1991 to 49 in 2003, with more than 30 000 monuments now opening their doors to more than 20 million visitors. The operation is no longer simply a matter of just opening doors; it is accompanied by a variety of activities including guided tours,

exhibitions, dedicated websites and brochures. The Co-ordination Office produces books, pins, brochures, posters, catalogues, postcards and other promotional material.

The EHD Awards scheme, which ran for six years, gave awards for international co-operation ventures and transfrontier activities.

From 1994 onwards 246 projects were submitted, some of which became in themselves an inspiration to others on themes such as:

- Revealing comparative features of buildings and architecture in Dublin and Budapest which were alike in period and function;

- Demonstrating the common cultural roots along the River Bug on the borders of Poland, Belarus and Ukraine to the wider public;
- Visits to France and Belgium by job-seekers involved in restoring historic buildings for an exchange of their respective experiences;
- Bringing to life the shared cultural heritage of Venice and the Croatian town Korčula on the theme of Marco Polo in a multimedia exhibition and other activities with youth participation;
- “Heritage Nights” in 29 towns and six regions of France, which involved almost 50 000 people and explored the links that connect regions, offering cultural exchanges on a European level.

Many of the projects are based on mutual discovery of heritage by two or more communities through activities such as cross-border tours or visits, conferences and the like. Some projects give pride of place to common heritage as in, for instance, the case of Roman heritage. Others are geared to a common methodology, such as better understanding heritage through the use of other means such as for example photography. ■





“Over 200,000 young people have taken part to date.”

“There is a strong sense that we participate in a European feast”

Sofia Aidoni,
Greece

“Challenges in how we approach this event, highlight its value and potential as a truly pan-European programme”

Colin Hatrick,
United Kingdom - Northern Ireland

“Recognising the European dimension means acceptance of European values as progressive and integrative, covering contributions made by different countries”

Rana Ibrahimbayova,
Azerbaijan

“It’s a possibility for the promotion of a common heritage beyond Bulgaria”

Iva Stamenkova,
Bulgaria



All these truly European cross-border projects have a great exemplary power. Many of the European Heritage Days projects, directly connected to them or inspired by them, have helped to build a culture of co-operation and understanding among citizens despite an obvious diversity of languages and cultures.

Over the years the European Heritage Days have established themselves as an important binding element and as a pan-European umbrella for national and regional activities in this field. The National Co-ordinators meet each year to exchange new ideas, build and revitalise their international network. These meetings usually lead to inspiring and enthusiastic discussions about the European dimension of the Heritage Days. It is evident that for many countries, linking

their national or local activities to the actions undertaken by the European Commission and such a broad-based pan-European organisation as the Council of Europe is a way to gain support for activities in the field of heritage at a regional and local level.

In the words of the people directly involved in the Heritage Days throughout Europe, the European context of the national and regional activities is vital for their success. ■

“Because of the location of Switzerland in the middle of Europe surrounded by five countries, we always have to consider the influence of our neighbouring countries on our heritage”

Cordula Kessler,
Switzerland

“It’s a chance to emphasise the link between Europeans and the distinctive lines of our complex cultural identity as Europeans”

Anna Conticello,
Italy

“Considering the wide geography and diversity of heritage across Europe, it’s very important to put all the ideas and experiences in a pool and share them with colleagues”

Arzu Demirel,
Turkey

“31 Television programmes, 125 radio transmissions and 1,350 articles, 10,000 monuments, 3,450 towns and 5.5 million visitors. Each year, we go from strength to strength. It’s very important to stay in close contact with our colleagues throughout Europe to pick up new ideas”

Carolyn Kolhoff,
Germany

“We aim to extend the awareness from family identity to national identity and to European identity”

Andreia Galvao,
Portugal

“It brings our own events to a bigger scale. So it has more impact, it makes it easier to finance the event in your own country”

Edith den Hartigh,
Netherlands

“Now that the EHD have reached their 25th anniversary and are wide spread throughout Europe, an appraisal of the programme’s European co-ordination is taking place.”



www.ehd.coe.int



APPRAISAL AND OUTLOOK: TOWARDS NEW MILESTONES



The media impact of the EHD is a reality, and this is also reflected by the growing number of visitors. The challenge is now how to build on the impressive results and move the project forward, reach people who are not yet involved , and increase general public access to our heritage, while developing new methods to raise awareness and new ways to communicate. Each country taking part in the EHD naturally has its own responsibility to assess how the EHD is developing within its own context and to determine how far public expectations are being met. One aspect of programme co-ordination that devolves on the Council of Europe’s Steering Committee for Cultural Heritage and Landscape (CDPATEP) and is discussed with the European Commission will be to take account of the results on the basis of a comparison between countries. Now that the EHD have reached their 25th anniversary and are wide spread throughout Europe, an appraisal of the programme’s European co-ordination is taking place.

In 2004, an in-depth analysis of the European dimension in the European Heritage Days was carried out. The SWOT analysis (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and

threats) showed that the Heritage Days were able to reach the population at large, but that at the same time there remained a weak perception of the European dimension in the media and

by the general public. It has not been possible so far to identify a single annual European theme for the EHD. The study further revealed that not all participating countries were able to organise the European Heritage Days adequately because of financial or organisational constraints. The report concluded that, in order to avoid the erosion of success and the exhaustion of organisers and the public, bold and fresh alternatives needed to be considered. It also counselled a reappraisal of the need for the official launch and of the separate meeting of the National Co-ordinators.

In 2006, Europa Nostra made a visibility study of the European dimension of the European Heritage Days in the participating countries.

28 of the 39 countries surveyed did not mention activities in other countries at all. Transfrontier activities, although there were many over the last 25 years, were still few and far between. The local and national Heritage Days were a clear success, but for some reason this is not leading to a fully transnational focus. This is one of the challenges the project now faces in view of using the great potential it has to reach people across Europe.

MORE POLITICAL GOALS

In 2008, the Council of Europe and the European Commission reformulated the aims of the European dimension of the European Heritage Days:

- Make citizens aware of Europe’s cultural diversity and wealth;
- Create a climate conducive to intercultural dialogue and appreciation of the rich mosaic of European cultures;
- Combat racism and xenophobia, encourage greater tolerance in Europe across national borders and enhance the sense of belonging among all Europeans;
- Inform the public and the political authorities of the need to protect cultural heritage from new threats;
- Encourage Europe to respond to the social, political and economic challenges it faces.

How can the European Heritage Days help to reach these aims?

THE DUAL PERSPECTIVE OF THE EHD

The EHD programme, by nature, has a twofold dimension:

– a **local dimension** devoted to capitalising on the local heritage resources: the EHD provide an annual opportunity to give access to a region’s tangible and intangible heritage and to promote it. The EHD are extremely important for triggering awareness

about the role heritage plays for sustainable development, for growth and jobs, skills development and social cohesion... Furthermore they show that well targeted investments in heritage spill out into other sectors. The EHD raise awareness that heritage is an asset to be used sustainably so as to hand it down to future generations. Today, this handing down requires the combined action not only of the departments specialising in heritage, but of society as a whole: political leaders and local authorities, enterprises, voluntary associations, individuals. The EHD website reflects the various European, national, regional and local initiatives tending towards such cooperation (www.ehd.coe.int);

– a **European dimension** aiming to showcase Europe’s great cultural diversity and cooperation by highlighting our cultural heritage. Europe’s common heritage, defined for the first time by Article 3 of the Council of Europe Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society (Faro, 2005), is not only an economic resource but also a factor of social cohesion, intercultural dialogue and mutual understanding among people with different origins and backgrounds and in this sense it enriches Europe.



“The forums set out to be a genuine experience for networking and gathering knowledge and expertise in the heritage field.”

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION :

www.coe.int/heritage

www.coe.int/herein

www.ehd.coe.int

The Secretariat for European co-ordination of the EHD programme, a joint Council of Europe-European Union action, is currently provided by the Secretariat of the Steering Committee for Cultural Heritage and Landscape :

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PROMOTING THE EUROPEAN DIMENSION OF THE EHD BY NEW METHODS

1. The “European Heritage Forums”

The European Heritage Forums are an annual international event bringing together a great range of stakeholders working on the interpretation, communication and dissemination of cultural heritage. It is a meeting-place where heritage professionals, educators, tourism operators, representatives of the media, researchers, members of voluntary organisations, as well as a circle of non-governmental and governmental organisations meet. At this moment the

European Forum is organised close to the staging of the EHD in the countries. The forums set out to be a genuine experience for networking and gathering knowledge and expertise in the heritage field. The forum should also shed light on themes for the EHD and on finding new ways forward.

The first European Heritage Forum was held in Brussels on 23 and 24 October 2008, on the occasion of the 20th anniversary of the European Heritage Days in Belgium, on the theme of “Heritage and dialogue”. The second Forum took place in Ljubljana (Slovenia) in 2009, where the theme was “Heritage, creativity and innovation”. In 2010, the third

Forum is scheduled to take place in Istanbul (Turkey) and will look into ways of opening up the wealth of European cultural heritage to young people and those who run the risk of being excluded.

The Forum provides the opportunity to raise fundamental, strategic questions and also to restate some of the issues surrounding the presentation and clarification of heritage in modern societies. In the coming years, the EHD will need to accommodate the understanding of cultural heritage, as well as its constant reinterpretation and reappraisal. The public’s full support is needed for us to preserve our cultural heritage for future generations.

2. Meetings of the EHD national co-ordinators

Since 2008 the EHD co-ordinators in the various countries meet at the close of the European Heritage Forum and this allows their involvement in the reflection which takes place during the Forum.

These meetings are an opportunity to evaluate the way the EHD took place in the participating countries, discuss the methods and practices which were used to address issues of common concern and, where useful to enter into transnational co-operation arrangements.

3. Activating the EHD website

The site (www.ehd.coe.int) aims not only to reflect each country’s initiatives relating to the EHD, but is also expected to play a dynamic role in developing the European and transnational dimensions of the programme and informing people about the EHD. A reinforced partnership with stakeholders from the media will contribute to the development of audiovisual material promoting the public’s greater access to the EHD on the international scene and a greater awareness of the importance of our heritage. ■

25 YEARS
OF EUROPEAN
HERITAGE DAYS

As with everything, the concept of the European Heritage Days, born 25 years ago, must be continually reinvented if it is to play a role in keeping future generations' interest in cultural heritage alive. This is all the more important as the world is rapidly changing. Communication technologies are being developed with great speed. and at the same time migration is changing societies across Europe.

And we are now also being faced with the need to deal with climate change. The 21st century brings great challenges, new risks and great opportunities. Our challenge is to take care of our heritage, to use what it offers in a sustainable way in order to find a balance between development and protection. Our heritage revitalises regions, spurs employment and social cohesion and offers great opportunities. The EHD show that there is a magnificent potential for future green development.

Now, just as 25 years ago, history is being written. And this is where the EHD play a role: they aim to show history as it evolves and to draw in young and old from all backgrounds and people who recently arrived in Europe to enjoy and take care of Europe's heritage so it can be handed on to future generations. By opening doors, we open our minds to the future. It's so simple: *"Open doors open minds"*.

"The existence of the European Heritage Days shows that there is a wider picture".

Eddie O'Hara of the Parliamentary Assembly
of the Council of Europe.

*"Our memory is never static,
it is constantly being negotiated and renegotiated".*

*"A unique piece of cultural heritage of lasting value
is the result of the combination of resources
from more than one culture"*

Carsten Paludan Müller of the Norwegian Institute
for Cultural Heritage Research

*"Heritage is not a parcel that can be handed over,
if we want new generations to keep it"*

Dame Liz Forgan,
former Chair of the Heritage Lottery Fund





Education and Culture DG

Culture Programme



European Heritage Days
Journées européennes
du patrimoine



COUNCIL OF EUROPE
CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

COUNCIL OF EUROPE

Directorate of Culture and Cultural and Natural Heritage (DGIV)

Cultural Heritage, Landscape and Spatial Planning Division

www.coe.int/heritage

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Directorate General for Education and Culture

Directorate C - Culture, Communication and Multilingualism

Culture Programme and Actions Unit

http://ec.europa.eu/comm/dgs/education_culture

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