

BULGARIA

Sofia: Archaeological Excavations

In the summer of 2010, I reported about the on-going extensive archaeological excavations in the centre of Sofia. This area of the capital preserves the memory of different historical periods with cultural evidence from the Roman, medieval and Ottoman periods.

The excavations started, because the site is situated on the track of the underground transportation system. The initial plan for the construction of the underground was to use the so-called “open” method, which would have required the removal of all the findings from the site and to present them in a museum environment. We informed the professional community about the devastating effect

this would have on the original context to the archaeological site. It would mean the loss of integrity and of the richness of the multi-layered history of the town that comprises more than 2000 years.

After the strong protest of several NGOs, including ICOMOS Bulgaria, against the way these excavations were carried out, the municipality and governmental institutions, along with the company involved in the construction of the underground, changed the method of construction for the underground. According to the new plan this change allows a great percentage of the findings to be preserved in-situ. Only 20% of the excavated findings will be moved from the site and kept in a museum environment. The aim of the new conservation project is to present a significant area of the excavated site to the public and in-situ.

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Excavations in the centre of Sofia

