

EUROPA NOSTRA

The 2016 and 2018 Europa Nostra Lists of the “7 Most Endangered Heritage Sites in Europe”

“The 7 Most Endangered” programme of Europa Nostra was launched in January 2013 as a bi-annual campaign to identify threatened monuments and sites in Europe and mobilise public and private partners – on the local, national and European levels – to find a viable future for those sites. It is not a funding programme. Its aim is to serve as a catalyst for action. Europa Nostra runs this programme in partnership with the European Investment Bank Institute and with the support of the Creative Europe programme of the European Union.

Nominations for monuments and sites at risk can be submitted by civil society or public bodies with the support of an organisation that is a member of Europa Nostra or directly by joining the pan-European network of member and associate organisations of Europa Nostra. The most threatened sites are selected by the Board of Europa Nostra from 14 sites shortlisted by a panel of specialists in history, archaeology, architecture, conservation, project analysis, and finance.

During the period of the current “Heritage at Risk – ICOMOS World Report on Monuments and Sites in Danger 2016–2019” the Europa Nostra list was presented twice in 2016 and 2018. The following is an extract of Europa Nostra’s press releases of 2016 and 2018, introducing the “7 Most Endangered Heritage Sites in Europe” of these two years.

Europa Nostra’s “7 Most Endangered Heritage Sites in Europe” in 2016

(listed in alphabetical order of their country)

Archaeological Site of Ererouyk and village of Ani Pemza, Armenia

Ererouyk is a superb monument of Early Christian architecture, an architecture of great variety and distinction, today often subjected to neglect, if not wilful destruction, in most of its original homeland around the Eastern Mediterranean. Armenian religious architecture, amongst the finest and most innovative, is well represented by Ererouyk. The monument dates back to the 6th century and lies on a rocky plateau close to the river that forms the border with Turkey, in the vicinity of the ancient capital Ani. All around the three-aisled basilica lay the remains of funerary and other relevant monuments which deserve immediate study and preservation. This is crucial for the understanding of a settlement within a multi-ethnic and multi-cultural framework during the Middle Ages, as demonstrated by relevant archaeological findings that also need to be studied and displayed.

The site is at constant danger from earthquakes, a danger increased by the condition of the monument. Yet, if preserved and well managed, it has the potential to give life to the whole region as a site that will attract visitors, with the nearby Soviet-era style



Fig. 1: Archaeological Site of Ererouyk and village of Ani Pemza, Armenia (© Patrick Donabédian)

village of Ani Pemza, built in 1926, serving as a potential centre for cultural tourism. The Centre of Studies and Documentation of Armenian Culture in Italy (CSDCA) submitted the nomination for “The 7 Most Endangered” 2016.

Patarei Sea Fortress in Tallinn, Estonia

Patarei is a complex of buildings, originally built as a naval fortress under Tsarist rule in 1829–1840. It became a prison between 1920 and 2005, and contains monuments to victims of both Nazi



Fig. 2: Patarei Sea Fortress in Tallinn, Estonia (© Andres Tartu)

and Stalinist rule. The site is thus closely linked to the sad vicissitudes of Estonia's recent history. Its rapid deterioration is due to a lack of maintenance in harsh climatic conditions.

The Estonian Heritage Society, which made the nomination for "The 7 Most Endangered" 2016, proposes the conversion of Patarei Sea Fortress into a central feature of the adjacent coastline, together with Tallinn Seaplane Harbour, a Grand Prix winner of the EU Prize for Cultural Heritage/Europa Nostra Award in 2013, and the Old Town of Tallinn and the Suomenlinna Fortress in Helsinki, which are both included on UNESCO's World Heritage List. If restored, the Fortress would serve as a centre for cultural and creative industries and also as a *lieu de mémoire*.

Helsinki-Malmi Airport, Finland

Helsinki-Malmi Airport is a rare surviving example of pre-World War II aviation architecture, built for the 1940 Olympic Games, scheduled to be held in Helsinki but cancelled due to the war.

Malmi Airport, complete with its original hangar, terminal and runways, is still in use with about 40,000 landings per year, offering the only free-schedule international service within 150 km. The area has been declared a cultural environment of national significance by Finland's National Board of Antiquities. Its open meadow has considerable biodiversity and makes the nature path encircling the site very popular among locals. Helsinki's new General Plan proposes to fill the airport with apartment blocks to be constructed in the early 2020s, while the state is to withdraw its operations from the airport by the end of 2016.

Following the nomination for "The 7 Most Endangered"



Fig. 3: Helsinki-Malmi Airport, Finland (© Seppo Sipilä)

of 2016, Europa Nostra Finland, supported by the Friends of Malmi Airport (FoMA), are seeking urgent support to persuade the City of Helsinki and Finland's new government to reverse previous decisions, keep the historic airport, and eventually propose the site for the UNESCO World Heritage List as part of the distinguished functionalist architecture built in Helsinki for the Olympic Games, an idea put forward by the Finnish National Board of Antiquities.

Colbert Swing Bridge in Dieppe, Normandy, France

The Colbert Bridge, built in 1889, is contemporary with the Eiffel Tower and still functions with its original system of hydraulic pressure, carrying about 12,000 vehicles and 1,800 pedestrians daily, which makes it an important example of the technical and

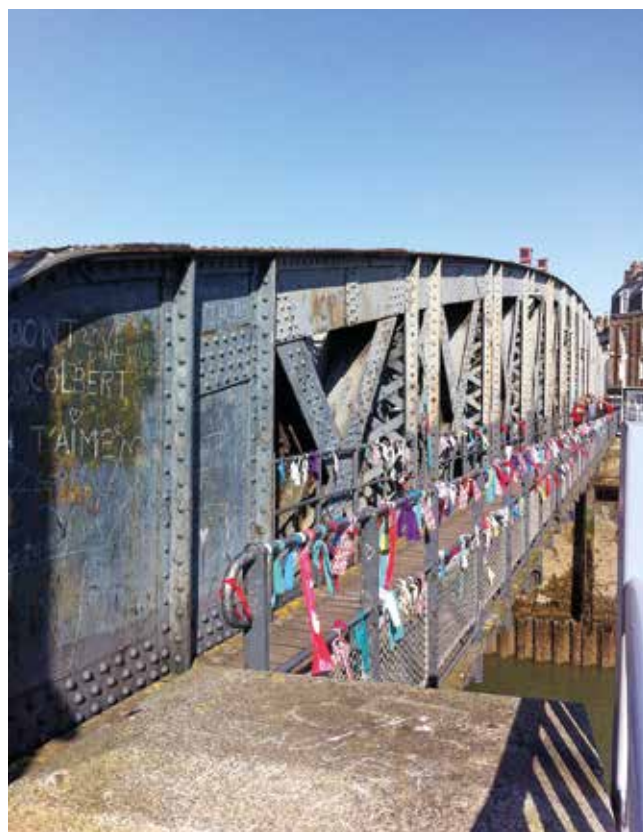


Fig. 4: Colbert Swing Bridge in Dieppe, Normandy, France (© Stephanie Fouache, CSPC)

architectural achievements of the late 19th century. It swings six to eight times each day for the harbour traffic and ensures greater reliability than many modern bridges.

Although one of the earliest examples of "movable" architecture, a living memory of Dieppe's cultural and social history and potentially a tourist attraction, its owner, the Syndicat Mixte du Port de Dieppe, is planning to demolish it and replace it with a new structure in 2017.

Following a firm recommendation from Dieppe's Colbert Bridge Protection Committee, the Fondation du Patrimoine submitted the nomination for "The 7 Most Endangered" of 2016. The Committee, which is also strongly supported by local public opinion, has requested urgent action to prevent the scheduled demolition through classification of the bridge as a Historic Monument, acceptance of the argument that restoration will be architecturally, socially and environmentally preferable to demolition and, subsequently, the modernisation of the bridge's mechanism.

Kamos of Chios, Island of Chios, Greece

The Kamos of Chios is a semi-urban, semi-rural area where the islands' wealthy families built beautiful mansions of local stone, surrounded by citrus orchard estates. The 200 houses and towers which have survived, combined with high stone walls separating the estates and narrow surrounding lanes, create a poetic landscape. Being the sole surviving example of an originally Genoese colonial order – although frequently rebuilt since the 14th century due to earthquakes (as in 1881) – the Kamos is now in danger. Some mansions have been well restored either as homes or as *hôtels de charme* (the Antouaniko received an EU Prize for



Fig. 5: Kampos of Chios, Island of Chios, Greece
(© Elliniki Etairia-Society for the Environment and Culture)

Cultural Heritage/Europa Nostra Award in 2015). Despite two official preservation decrees, however, protection has proven inadequate. Meanwhile the replacement of citrus with the thirstier cultivation of potatoes and vegetables has led to serious problems of water quality and quantity. Other threats are also increasing through traffic and the partial demolition of stone boundary walls.

This site of magical beauty requires an inventory of its distinguished buildings and long-term funding of conservation work so as to remain an outstanding example of Europe's richly varied cultural heritage. Elliniki Etairia – Society for the Environment and Cultural Heritage in collaboration with The Society of Friends of the Kampos of Chios nominated the site for “The 7 Most Endangered” of 2016.

Convent of St. Anthony of Padua, Extremadura, Spain

The Convent of St. Anthony of Padua near Cáceres comprises a late Gothic church, built in 1476 with some small additions in the Renaissance period and, most notably, others from between



Fig. 6: Convent of St. Anthony of Padua, Extremadura, Spain
(© Courtesy of Hispania Nostra)

1656 and 1661. The convent lies in the village of Garrovillas de Alconétar, which has a long history and a wealth of monuments, all in danger of dereliction as its inhabitants move on to larger cities.

Given the importance and critical state of the site but also the lack of resources in the current economic situation, Hispania Nostra, which submitted the nomination for “The 7 Most Endangered” of 2016, proposes to make the maximum possible use of volunteers in order to restore the convent and other neighbouring monuments. This should prove an inspiring example of broad social participation in the ongoing effort to protect our heritage, a trend as hopeful as it is necessary if the richness of the European cultural tradition is to be preserved.

Ancient city of Hasankeyf and its surroundings, Turkey

Hasankeyf, sitting on the banks of the River Tigris, is one of the most important architectural and archaeological sites in Europe, boasting a rich biodiversity and 12,000 years of human history. Masterpieces of Islamic architecture, dating from the 12th to 15th centuries C. E., make the town one of the best-preserved witnesses to Seljuk urban culture, particularly from the Artukid and Ayyubid dynasties.

A small town with a great heritage, Hasankeyf already attracts about 500,000 visitors each year, a number expected to rise. Given its historical, architectural and economic significance for the region, public opinion supports its preservation. The area was declared a First-Degree Archaeological Site by Turkey's Supreme Board of Monuments in 1978 and has been under the protection of the Culture Ministry's General Directorate of Antiquities and Museums since 1981.

The urgent threat to Hasankeyf is posed by the Ilisu dam hydroelectric power project which, if implemented as planned, would submerge the site under 65 metres of water by 2018. The Government of Turkey has a vision for salvaging selected monuments and developing the site as a prestigious destination. However, Hasankeyf's preservation in its original location might prove more economically advantageous than the dam, and its cultural significance for Turkey is incomparable.

The Cultural Awareness Foundation nominated Hasankeyf for “The 7 Most Endangered” of 2016 in an attempt to preserve it and to promote dialogue about heritage conservation and sustainability.



Fig. 7: Ancient city of Hasankeyf and its surroundings, Turkey
(© Courtesy of Hasankeyf Matters)



Fig. 8: Venice Lagoon, Italy (© Uwe Arno Glockner)

Special mention: Venice Lagoon, Italy

There could be no Venice and no Venetian civilisation without the lagoon. Few historic sites in the world demonstrate so clearly the interdependence of humankind with our environment, of nature with culture.

Yet, just as the world contributes to the conservation of monuments in the city, unsustainable development is cutting the physical branch on which Venice has always perched.

Italia Nostra nominated the Venice Lagoon for “The 7 Most Endangered” of 2016 as part of a long-term plan to save both the lagoon and the city. In the short-term, it proposes: the exclusion of large-scale cruise ships from the lagoon; the suspension of new projects to dredge channels; the cancellation of all major commercial port projects; and the reconstruction of salt marshes. And in the longer term: the transfer of major port activities to Trieste; the rebirth of the abandoned and polluted industrial area of Marghera to become a science and technology park; and incentives to bring inhabitants and companies to Venice. The challenges are huge, demanding a rare combination of conservation and environmental and social sensitivity.

Europa Nostra’s “7 Most Endangered Heritage Sites in Europe” in 2018

(listed in alphabetical order of their country)

Post-Byzantine Churches in Voskopoja and Vithkuqi, Albania

A number of Post-Byzantine churches in Voskopoja and Vithkuqi, situated in south-eastern Albania, are the most representative monuments of 17th–18th century ecclesiastical art in the Balkans and masterpieces of the post-Byzantine style. War, plundering and natural disasters have seriously damaged this group of twelve churches. The surrounding Christian population has greatly declined and a subsequent lack of clergy has resulted in the majority of the churches remaining unused for most of the year. The churches are under the responsibility of the Institute of Cultural Monuments. The listed Church of Saint George in Voskopoja, which won a Europa Nostra Award in 2011 for its outstanding conservation, now faces the threat of theft and high-



Fig. 1: Post-Byzantine Churches in Voskopoja and Vithkuqi, Albania (© K. Kallamata)

lights the urgency with which these remarkable churches need to be protected. The nomination for the “7 Most Endangered” programme of 2018 was submitted by “The Past for the Future” Foundation.

Historic Centre of Vienna, Austria

The Historic Centre of Vienna has immense significance for Europe’s tangible and intangible culture, as a city of great architectural importance and as an exceptional centre for the development of arts. In 2001, it was inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List. In 2012, a high-rise development, which will include the rebuilding and enlargement of the Hotel Intercontinental, was planned at the site of the Vienna Ice-Skating Club. The development would totally spoil the most famous view of the city from the Belvedere Palace and Gardens. In 2014, the City Council of Vienna issued a “High-Rise Concept” and a “Glacis Master Plan” which permit the construction of high-rise buildings at several points of the Ringstrasse area. These high-rise buildings would spoil the urban character of this area as well as the roofscapes and morphology of the Historic Centre of Vienna. Following numerous and unfruitful exchanges with Austria and the Vienna City Council, the World Heritage Committee inscribed the Historic Centre of Vienna on the List of World Heritage in Danger in July 2017. Europa Nostra Austria made the nomination for the “7 Most Endangered” programme of 2018.



Fig. 2: Historic Centre of Vienna, Austria (© F. Neuwirth)



Fig. 3: The Buzludzha Monument, Bulgaria (© Roman Robroek)



Fig. 4: David Gareji Monasteries and Hermitage, Georgia (© Shalva Lejava)

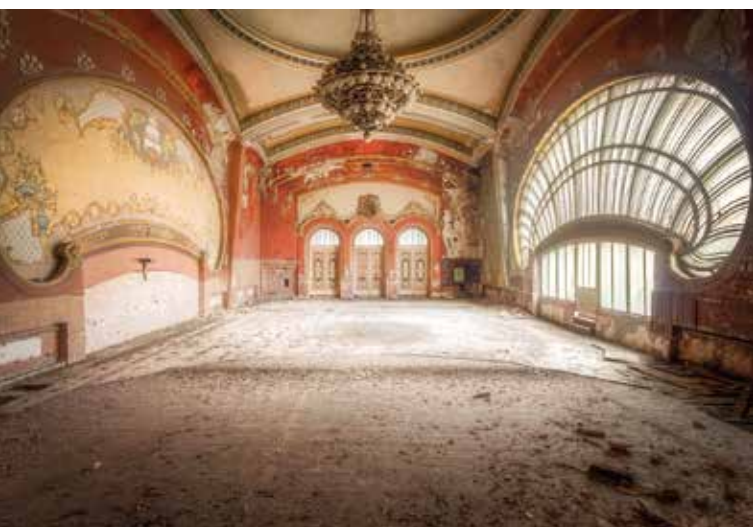


Fig. 5: Constanta Casino, Romania (© Roman Robroek)

The Buzludzha Monument, Bulgaria

Located in the mountains in the heart of Bulgaria, the Buzludzha Monument is an imposing example of 20th-century architecture. Built in 1981 to be the House-Monument of the then ruling Bulgarian Communist Party, the structure was in use for just eight years. Soon after the end of the Communist regime, the monument was abandoned and has since been victim to thefts, vandalism and severe weather conditions. The ostentatious finish of its Brutalist architecture, the complex iconography and the colourful mosaics have decayed. However, the building attracts increasing international attention. No action has been taken by the responsible authorities to protect the site so far. The Buzludzha Project Foundation, which made the nomination for the “7 Most Endangered” programme of 2018, proposes that the Buzludzha Monument could become an example of appropriate preservation and interpretation of other similar *lieux de mémoire* (places of remembrance) throughout Central and Eastern Europe.

David Gareji Monasteries and Hermitage, Georgia

The David Gareji Monasteries and Hermitage are located in Eastern Georgia, on the semi-desert Iori plateau, and partly extend into neighbouring Azerbaijan. Dating back to the 6th century, the site consists of 22 rock-hewn monasteries and more than 5,000 sanctuaries and cave-cells. The combination of rock architecture, medieval murals, prehistoric archaeology and paleontological fields makes the entire ensemble a masterpiece of Georgian culture. It is registered as a Monument of National Importance. The monastery complex faces the threat of irreversible deterioration. The main problem is the disintegration of the rocks. The churches and other spaces suffer extreme structural damage. The collapse of the structures also threatens the wall paintings. The monastery complex is under the ownership of the Patriarchate of Georgia. It is still an active monastic centre with daily services, which adds to its importance and underlines the urgency of its preservation. Increased tourism at the site is an opportunity but its sustainability needs to be addressed. The Georgian Arts and Culture Centre submitted the nomination for the “7 Most Endangered” programme of 2018.

Constanta Casino, Romania

Built in 1910, the Constanta Casino has become a landmark of the Black Sea shore. Daniel Renard, the Swiss-Romanian architect who designed the building, opted for a lavish expression of Art Nouveau to reflect Romania’s modernisation during the reign of Carol I. Following many years of alternating commercial and state-held responsibility for the building’s care, the Casino was abandoned in the 2000s. It remains so to this day due to local authorities’ inability to find funding and to launch a rescue and restoration operation. There have been several transfers of administrative rights from the Municipality of Constanța, the last of these being to the National Investments Agency within the Ministry of Development. The main danger to the building comes from the corrosion and rusting of structural metal parts. Sea storms and winds have shattered most of the windows facing the sea. It is very likely that the roof will collapse if this process continues. The nomination for the “7 Most Endangered” programme of 2018 was submitted by the ARCHÉ Association.

The Prinkipo Greek Orphanage, Princes’ Islands, Turkey

The Prinkipo Greek Orphanage is considered the largest wooden building in Europe and the second largest in the world. Located on Prinkipo, on the Princes’ Islands off the coast of Istanbul, it was



Fig. 6: The Prinkipo Greek Orphanage, Princes' Islands, Turkey (© Baris Altan)

built in 1899 to the design of French architect Alexandre Vallaury. The timber-framed structure features elaborately decorated wooden columns in the grand hall and panelled ceilings with decorative mouldings. The building functioned as an orphanage until its closure in 1964. Since then, the neglected structure has deteriorated. Damaged by a fire in 1980, today the building is exposed to adverse weather conditions. Sections of the roof and corner posts have already fallen and the Orphanage is now at immediate risk of further collapse. Europa Nostra Turkey submitted the nomination for the “7 Most Endangered” programme of 2018. The setting-up of a Centre of Environmental and Interreligious Dialogue in the building, as conceived by the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople, could figure as the most appropriate future use of the Orphanage.



Fig. 7: Grimsby Ice Factory, United Kingdom (© Andy Marshall, World Monuments Fund)

Grimsby Ice Factory, United Kingdom

The Grimsby Ice Factory is understood to be the oldest ice factory in the United Kingdom. Designed by the engineer W. F. Cott, the factory dates from 1900 and is a substantial Grade II* listed red brick industrial building. The site is arguably the most prominent physical reminder of Grimsby's fishing and maritime heritage, the largest fishing port in the world at the start of the 20th century. The factory has been in a state of serious decline since its closure in 1990. The roof is now severely damaged, allowing water into the interiors, and much of its metal work and electrical fittings have been stolen. Moreover, there have been threats of demolition. The factory has remained in private ownership. A mixed-use development proposal initiated by the Great Grimsby Ice Factory Trust, estimated to potentially create upwards of 125 jobs, has so far been unsuccessful in securing funding, resulting in the future of the Ice Factory remaining uncertain. The nomination for the “7 Most Endangered” programme of 2018 was made by SAVE Britain's Heritage.