



WHO OWNS THE MONUMENTS?

"There are two things in an edifice: its use and its beauty. Its use belongs to its owner, its beauty to everyone. Thus, the owner exceeds his rights in destroying it." - Victor Hugo

International conference on the occasion of 20th anniversary of National Trust of Slovakia

9.11.2016, Bratislava, Slovakia

MISSION

To present and share experiences and best practices of National Trust movement and other interesting NGO, state or commercial initiatives on the topic of saving, preserving, restoring, managing, using and promoting heritage sites of cultural, historical, natural or any other significance on the local, national and international level.

During the conference we would like to try to find the answer on the question which we put in the title of our conference and we would like to support the idea, that we all can contribute to save, protect and meaningfully use our common heritage either by choosing to take action or simply adopting the right attitude.

ACTION STATEMENT

Introduce, to professionals as well as the general public, various effective (inclusive, volunteer and traditional) models of monument care in selected countries. Emphasis is placed on the National Trusts models and importance of international (mainly Central Europe) cooperation and mutual collaboration of state, non-governmental and commercial organizations in the area of protection and meaningful use of monuments and why it matters and why we should care.

GOALS OF THE CONFERENCE

1. To point out the significant fact, that cultural and natural heritage in all countries is first of all a public matter and affects us all irrespective of whether we are the owners, managers, admirers of its diverse values or where we come from.
2. To disseminate technical expertise, knowledge, wisdom and experiences, creative and innovative ideas, to present interesting projects, case-studies and results and proven methods of protecting, restoring, managing and presenting cultural heritage.
3. To present Slovak entities and interesting local projects, which have the potential to bring advancements in the area of common European heritage protection. To support this goal, we are working toward implementing our project into the schedule of the EU presidency of the Slovak Republic.
4. To create a space for the exchange of practical information and findings, which numerous heritage NGOs, commercial entities and state organizations active in restoration and protection of cultural heritage have gained as well as promoting and enhancing mutual and effective collaboration among them.
5. To advance the decades old tradition in Europe of civil organizations cooperating on the protection and use of cultural heritage, and to build a society with more value toward volunteering and providing these individuals and organizations with more opportunities and space to create a lasting impact.
6. To promote and build general interest in cultural heritage, history, nature, their associated art forms and their inherent values.
7. To introduce the organization behind the conference, its roots, its past, current and future plans and activities, its mission and its international as well as local belonging.

TARGET AUDIENCE - PLAYING THE ROLE OF BOTH PASSIVE AND ACTIVE PARTICIPANTS

1. Experts from the field of cultural heritage
2. Non-governmental organizations and commercial companies dedicated to the matter of monument restoration
3. Owners and managers of cultural heritage sites - from private owners through local governments to state institutions and organizations
4. Education institutions and associated students in the area of cultural heritage, history, instructive tourism (or recreational education) and ecology
5. General public with an interest in the issue of cultural heritage

Multiple experts, owners and managers of cultural heritage sites will get an opportunity to participate in the conference as presenters and/or to express their views in panel discussions. The event will be also accessible to the general public.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION - CURRENT SITUATION AND PROBLEM STATEMENT

Monument protection is a broad, professional and multidisciplinary activity, and has developed across several international institutions for decades, particularly within UNESCO. The Slovak Republic as a Member State of the Council of Europe and UNESCO signed or ratified many major international conventions and charters that oblige us to effectively carry out the protection, preservation, recovery, renovation, restoration, use and presentation of cultural heritage sites, historical manors and archaeological artifacts. At the same time as one of the founding states of the non-governmental international organization ICOMOS (International Council on Monuments and Sites), Slovakia participated on the elaboration of charters aimed at the issue of protection and restoration of cultural heritage from a global perspective. Both mentioned facts represent not only a moral, but also a political commitment in addressing, and more importantly, responsibly implementing, the protection of cultural heritage.

Responsibility for the conservation of cultural and natural heritage, its meaningful and sustainable use and permanent protection is a common objective, the task of us all, not only of the respective owners. Well known French author, supporter of the great values of cultural heritage, Victor Hugo, already in the year of 1832 wrote: *"Use [of an edifice] belongs to its owner, its beauty to everyone. Thus, the owner exceeds his rights in destroying it."* Cultural heritage is thus a public matter and its protection is exercised in the public interest in every democratic nation, the Slovak Republic being no exception. The protection of cultural heritage is, in fact, established as an obligation of every individual in the second paragraph of article 44 of the constitution of the Slovak Republic.

"So that cultural heritage, in all its forms, may survive, society must exert a joint effort for its preservation. ... Support for cultural diversity as one of the manifestations of cultural heritage perceptions without prejudice, along with ensuring equal access to cultural heritage belong among the common European values, to which the Slovak Republic, as a member of the Council of Europe, should adhere to," - states the proposal report of the Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic to the ratification of the European Convention on the importance of cultural heritage for society.

Cultural heritage is a significant building block of the inner potential of every country. Among other things, it offers various sustainable solutions to social and economic problems. An essential feature

of the protection of cultural heritage is the activation of citizen interest toward the environment they live in. Multiple non-governmental organizations have for decades spurred people's awareness for cultural heritage internationally as well as in Slovakia. The third sector has long disposed a strong potential in acting as an initiator of joint projects of public-private partnerships - partnerships between state or local and business sectors.

MAIN TOPICS AND PROGRAM OF THE CONFERENCE:

Program of this international conference will comprise mainly of presentations of state, non-governmental and private sector representatives from England, Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Austria, along with presentations of experts from the field of heritage in Slovakia.

The speakers will deal with the following topics:

1. The value of European cultural heritage as a factor of economic and social development.
2. Monuments without frontiers - common cultural heritage of Europe as seen by the eyes of today's users and visitors of monuments.
3. National Trusts – inclusive worldwide models of cultural and natural heritage care.
4. Nontraditional models of funding restoration of the historic environment.
5. Recovering monuments with the aid of the unemployed.
6. The phenomenon of volunteering and volunteer organizations in the protection and care for cultural and natural heritage of Europe.
7. Models of modern and interactive cultural heritage promotion.
8. European certificate for managers of historic buildings and cultural heritage sites.
9. And others...

Locations:

The main part of the conference will take place in the center of Bratislava on 9th of November 2016, accompanied by other events outside of the main venue. Short excursions to selected locations of cultural heritage will be prepared on 10th of November 2016 for the foreign participants of the conference.

PAST EXPERIENCES OF THE ORGANIZING ENTITY – THE NATIONAL TRUST OF SLOVAKIA

Our organization, whose mission it is to protect the cultural, historical and natural heritage of Slovakia, and present it within, as well as outside, the borders of the country, actively cooperates with international partners since its founding in 1996. We actively participated on the creation of ENNHO (European Network of National Heritage Organizations) in 1999. Within the ENNHO, we prepared three annual editions of "European exchange program for professionals in the field of cultural heritage" while collaborating with multiple international partners. "Old origin - new use" is an example of one of the programs we prepared in 2004. In this year, we were also the trustees of the ENNHO secretariat.

In 2001 we were involved in drafting a document entitled "Strategy of sustainable protection and utilization of historical buildings." In the same year we prepared a presentation on the issue of cultural heritage in Slovakia from the point of view of NGOs and presented it within the Committee on Culture of the European Parliament in Brussels. In 2002 we were entrusted with setting up the National Administration on cultural policy of the Slovak Republic led by the Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic. In 2002 we also organized an international seminar under the name "Recreational education - interpretation and presentation of cultural and natural heritage" with the cooperation of Interpret Europe (European Association for Heritage Interpretation) and the University of Economics in Bratislava.

"Graffiti - problem of us all?" is another international conference we organized in Bratislava and Košice in 2004. Since 2007 we regularly prepare and organize an international festival of garden culture - Weekend of open parks and gardens.

Besides conferences, seminars and events, we also arranged several presentations of international experts in Slovakia on the topic of renewal, maintenance and management of cultural and natural heritage. We are partners of multiple international projects supported by programs of the European Union - Culture 2000, Erasmus and others. We actively participate on the work of numerous international organizations dedicated to cultural and natural heritage, as International National Trusts Organisation, Europa Nostra, HEREIN system of European heritage policies, Interpret Europe and others. Our employees and volunteers actively participate on many international conferences, seminars and trainings.



Conference main partners:

INTO - is an international network of National Trusts and similar non-governmental organisations, globally diverse but united in a shared commitment to work through cooperation, coordination and comradeship. INTO works to develop and promote best conservation practices, increase the capacity of individual organisations, establish Trusts where they do not presently exist, and advocate in the interests of heritage conservation.



Ministry of Culture of Slovak Republic – is the central body of state administration of the Slovak Republic for national language, preservation of monumental funds, national heritage and library science, art, copyright and copyright laws, extension service and folk artistic production, support of cultural innovation for ethnic minorities, presentation of the Slovak culture and arts abroad, relations with churches and religious societies, media and audiovisual.



The conference is organized within Slovak Council of Europe Presidency 2016

