EUROPEAN HERITAGE VOLUNTEERS

TRADITIONAL CRAFTS IN PRACTICE: TRAINING COURSES FOR EMERGING HERITAGE PROFESSIONALS 2022 / 2023 / 2024

EVALUATION REPORT

EUROPEAN HERITAGE VOLUNTEERS

European Heritage Volunteers has been active in the field of heritage volunteering for over 30 years. Its main objective has been to provide a platform that reaches out to heritage sites in need of support or visibility, while at the same time addressing the gap in opportunities for young heritage professionals wishing to contribute to ongoing efforts in heritage conservation and to gain practical skills to complement their academic education.

The programme is recognised for its professionalism and academic rigor, providing a combination of specialised training courses and hands-on projects hosted at heritage sites across Europe. Participants are carefully selected, consisting of young heritage professionals and dedicated heritage enthusiasts, all of whom are committed to advancing their knowledge and skills in the sector. Through these initiatives, participants gain a comprehensive understanding of conservation and restoration techniques, traditional crafts, and the broader context of heritage preservation. The programme is led by Technical Instructors who are experts in their respective fields and supported by a team of highly trained Group Coordinators, ensuring a high-quality educational experience.

Each training course and project is tailored to meet the specific needs of the heritage site in collaboration with local partners, reflecting the rich diversity of European heritage. The courses and projects may focus on urgent conservation interventions, the revitalisation of neglected heritage sites, traditional craftsmanship, or archaeological work. Furthermore, those conducted in historic parks and cultural landscapes are increasingly addressing critical issues such as climate adaptability and resilience strategies, making them an ideal platform for raising awareness on contemporary environmental concerns. In addition to these core themes, the programme encompasses areas such as research, documentation, interpretation, archival work, and the preservation of intangible heritage.

European Heritage Volunteers is supported by a vast European network, which connects the expertise of heritage professionals with the commitment of civil society activists. This dynamic network provides cutting-edge educational opportunities that examine heritage within its historical context, its present-day relevance, and its future potential. The programme not only enhances the participants' understanding but also fosters community involvement and local empowerment, generating lasting benefits for the preservation of cultural heritage.

European Heritage Volunteers fosters intercultural exchange that transcends traditional professional networking, offering a unique platform for dialogue where participants from diverse cultural backgrounds and disciplines come together to share ideas and experiences. This exchange not only builds meaningful connections between individuals but also serves as a conduit for peace, especially in an era of global conflict. Rooted in the UNESCO Constitution's belief that peace is nurtured within the minds of individuals, the programme advances the idea that heritage belongs to all humankind, encouraging collective responsibility for its safeguarding. By collaborating across cultural divides, participants recognise heritage as a powerful unifying force. This interaction not only preserves the past but also enriches the present, using heritage as a catalyst for deeper global understanding, respectful appreciation and cooperation.

Over the past two decades, European Heritage Volunteers has organised more than 250 training courses and projects in more than 30 countries throughout the European continent, with the participation of nearly 3,000 volunteers from 75 countries across all five UNESCO regions. This global engagement highlights the widespread impact and significance of the organisation's work in the field of heritage conservation, non-formal heritage education, and awareness raising for heritage preservation.

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OVERVIEW AND STRUCTURE OF TRAINING COURSES

"TRADITIONAL CRAFTS IN PRACTICE" TRAINING COURSES

The "Traditional Crafts in Practice" Training Courses are immersive two-week programmes that combine theoretical instruction with hands-on conservation work at heritage sites across Europe. Designed for emerging heritage professionals and young heritage practitioners, these courses provide participants with practical skills in traditional techniques such as masonry and woodcraft and heritage-related conservation and restoration techniques, alongside contextual knowledge of the historical and environmental factors that shaped these practices. Over the 2022 – 2024 period, a total of **22 "Traditional Crafts in Practice" Training Courses** were developed, with several offering multiple editions across different years, resulting in **37 course editions** in total. Each course integrates participants into the cultural fabric of the hosting community, offering opportunities to learn from experienced craftsmen and other heritage professionals and engage with living heritage practices. By focusing on marginalised or rural sites, the training courses bring international attention to lesser-known heritage assets, contributing to their preservation and raising local awareness. Through a transnational network of partners and the international and interdisciplinary composition of the groups of participants, the courses foster intercultural dialogue and knowledge exchange, equipping a new generation of heritage practitioners with the skills and perspectives needed to safeguard Europe's cultural diversity.

TARGET GROUP

The "Traditional Crafts in Practice" Training Courses are designed for emerging heritage professionals and young heritage practitioners. Participants typically include students and young professionals from fields such as architecture, archaeology, history, restoration, and others. The training courses welcome individuals with varying levels of experience, from those seeking practical exposure to heritage conservation to those aiming to deepen their existing skills. By bringing together participants from diverse cultural and educational backgrounds, the courses foster intercultural dialogue and collaborative learning, enriching the preservation and appreciation of Europe's cultural heritage.

OFFICIAL PARTNERS OF THE TRAINING COURSES

The European Heritage Volunteers Network consists of organisations and institutions dedicated to the preservation, promotion, and education of cultural heritage. These stakeholders include non-governmental organisations, heritage associations, public authorities in various levels, museums, universities, and other educational and research institutions. These partners collaborate with European Heritage Volunteers to host Training Courses, providing expertise, resources, and local knowledge. They contribute by facilitating access to heritage sites, offering technical guidance, and supporting the implementation of conservation tasks. Their involvement ensures that courses are deeply rooted in local contexts while benefiting from a transnational exchange of ideas and practices, enriching both participants and communities.

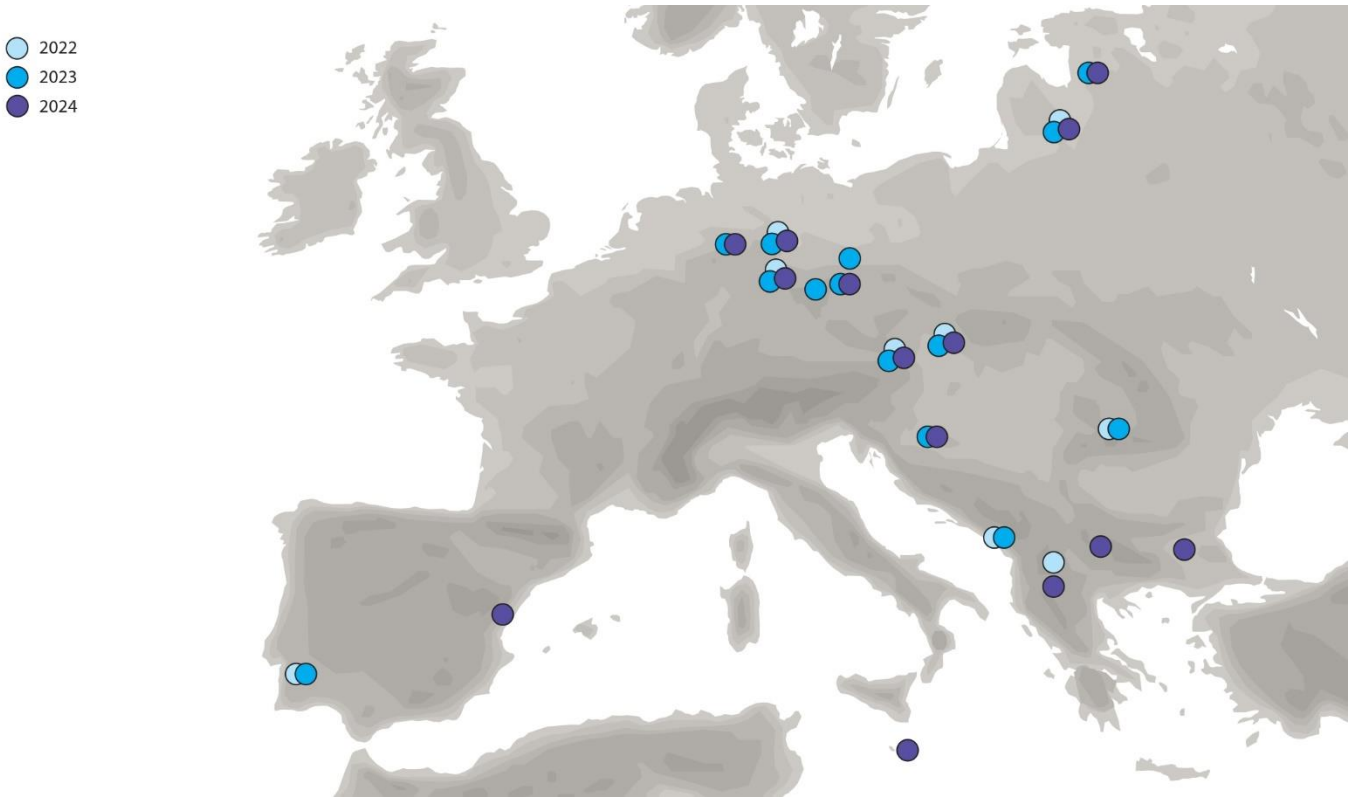
GROUP COORDINATORS

Group Coordinators manage the logistical, social, and intercultural aspects of the Training Courses. They act as mediators, facilitating communication between European Heritage Volunteers, local partners, technical instructors, and participants ensuring smooth collaboration and mutual understanding. Their responsibilities include overseeing daily activities, supporting group cohesion, and assisting with the practical implementation of the courses. Coordinators attend a preparatory seminar to gain the skills needed to manage these responsibilities effectively. Typically, they are young professionals from diverse academic and cultural backgrounds, committed to fostering enriching experiences for participants and contributing to the preservation of heritage sites.

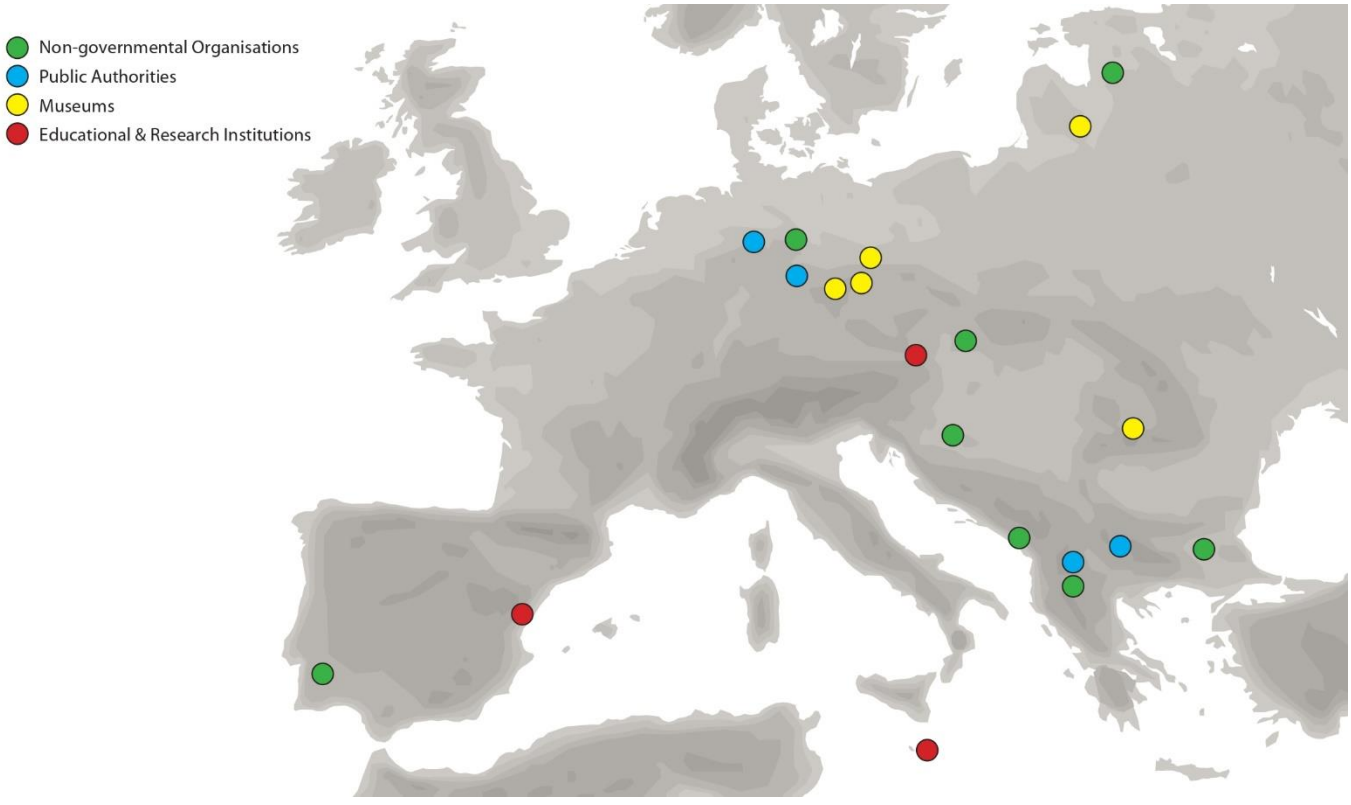
TECHNICAL INSTRUCTORS

The Technical Instructors of the Training Courses are highly skilled heritage professionals with expertise in heritage conservation, traditional crafts, or related disciplines. They play a crucial role in leading the hands-on components of training courses, teaching participants the techniques required for the specific conservation tasks. The Technical Instructors guide participants through practical work while sharing insights into the historical and technical contexts of the heritage sites. They collaborate closely with the official partners and Group Coordinators to ensure the smooth implementation of activities. By bridging theory and practice, Technical Instructors contribute to the transmission of specialised knowledge, cultivating an appreciation of traditional skills among emerging professionals.

TRAINING COURSES 2022 – 2024
LOCATIONS



TRAINING COURSES 2022 – 2024
OFFICIAL PARTNERS



DEMOGRAPHICS DATA AND GLOBAL REACH

PARTICIPANT DEMOGRAPHICS AND DIVERSITY

- **Number of Participants:** In total, 431 individuals took part in the 37 course editions between 2022 and 2024.
- **Average Group Size:** Each Training Course edition hosted an average of 11 to 12 participants.
- **Participant Demographics:** The average age of participants was 24, ranging from 18 to 39 years old.
- **Gender Identity Representation:** Approximately 76% of participants identified themselves as female, the remainder identified as 23% as male and 1% with other gender identities.
- **Regions of Origin:** Most participants originated from Europe, followed by Asia and the Middle East.
- **Diversity of Nationalities:** Participants represented a broad spectrum of 67 countries.
- **Countries Represented:** Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bangladesh, Belarus, Belgium, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Croatia, Czechia, Denmark, Egypt, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Honduras, Hong Kong, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Latvia, Lebanon, Libya, Lithuania, Malaysia, Malta, Mexico, Montenegro, Morocco, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, North Macedonia, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russian Federation, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Switzerland, Syria, Taiwan, Türkiye, Ukraine, United Kingdom, Uruguay, Venezuela.

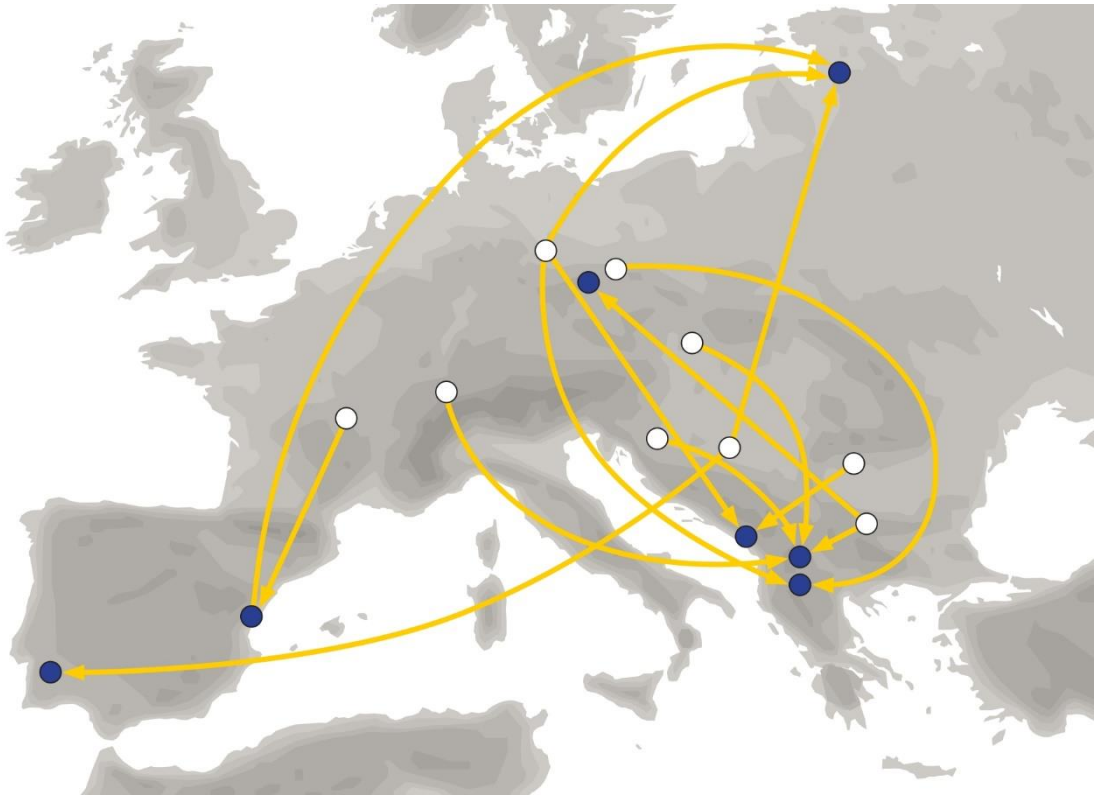
GROUP COORDINATORS DEMOGRAPHICS AND DIVERSITY

- **Number of Group Coordinators:** In total, 52 individuals engaged as Group Coordinators in the Training Courses between 2022 and 2024.
- **Group Coordinators Demographics:** The age of Group Coordinators ranged between 27 to 38 years old.
- **Regions of Origin:** Most Group Coordinators originated from Europe, followed by the Americas, Middle East and Africa.
- **Diversity of Nationalities:** Participants represented a broad spectrum of 27 countries.
- **Countries Represented:** Australia, Bangladesh, Belarus, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Croatia, Egypt, Germany, Honduras, Lebanon, Lithuania, Malta, Mexico, Montenegro, Netherlands, North Macedonia, Portugal, Serbia, South Africa, Spain, Switzerland, Türkiye, United Kingdom, USA.





TRAINING COURSES 2022 – 2024
TRANSBOUNDARY MOBILITY
OF TECHNICAL INSTRUCTORS



HERITAGE EXPERTS IN COLLABORATION

The European Heritage Volunteers Network embodies a dynamic model of international collaboration, bringing together Technical Instructors from across Europe to lead “Traditional Crafts in Practice” Training Courses that merged teaching with transboundary exchange of knowledge. At the **22 Training Courses** featured in this report, **44 experienced craftsmen, local specialists and other heritage professionals** worked together creating opportunities to share skills and methodologies. The accompanying map above, visualises this transboundary exchange, illustrating the flow of expertise across countries.

Technical Instructors come from diverse professional backgrounds, as traditioal craftmanship, conservation-restoration, architecture, or archaeology, and bring years of practical experience to the courses. The following list showcases the diversity of professional backgrounds of the Technical Instructors providing an impressive example of intercultural and interdisciplinary education, professional interconnectedness and heritage-related outreach.

- Archaeologist – Croatia
- Archaeologist – Croatia
- Archaeologist – North Macedonia
- Archaeologist – Spain
- Archaeologist and Geologist – Slovakia
- Architect specialised in Cultural Heritage – Bulgaria
- Architect specialised in Cultural Heritage – Latvia
- Architect specialised in Heritage Conservation – France
- Architect specialised in Heritage Conservation – Lithuania
- Architect specialised in Heritage Conservation and Heritage Education – Spain
- Architect specialised in Heritage Conservation, University Professor – Malta
- Architect specialised in Vernacular Architecture – Bulgaria
- Architect with additional education in Heritage Conservation, University Professor – Spain

TRANSBOUNDARY MOBILITY OF TECHNICAL INSTRUCTORS

- Architect with additional education in Heritage Conservation, University Lecturer – Austria
- Architect with specialisation in Heritage Conservation – Germany
- Carpenter specialised in Heritage Conservation – Germany
- Carpenter with additional education in Heritage Conservation – Lithuania
- Civil Engineer specialised in Heritage Conservation – Slovakia
- Conservator-Restorer – Germany
- Conservator-Restorer of Historic Heritage and Master of Crafts – Latvia
- Conservator-Restorer specialised in Historic Surfaces of Architectural Heritage – Serbia
- Conservator-Restorer specialised in Stone, Plasters, Paintings, and Historic Surfaces and Architect – Germany
- Conservator-Restorer specialised in Textiles – Romania
- Conservator-Restorer specialised in Textiles and Leather – Romania
- Conservator-Restorer specialised in Wall Paintings – Germany
- Conservator-Restorer specialised in Wall Paintings – Portugal
- Conservator-Restorer specialised in Wall Paintings – Serbia
- Conservator-Restorer specialised in Wall Paintings – Switzerland
- Conservator-Restorer specialised in Wall Paintings and Mosaics, University Lecturer – North Macedonia
- Conservator-Restorer specialised in Wall Paintings, University Lecturer – Croatia
- Craftsman experienced in Traditional Techniques – Montenegro
- Craftsman experienced in Traditional Wood Techniques – Albania
- Craftsman specialised in Vernacular Architecture and Architect – Bulgaria
- Gardener and Landscape Architect specialised in Historic Parks and Gardens – Germany
- Geologist and Researcher on Traditional Materials for Heritage Conservation – Austria
- Historian – Germany
- Historian and Historian of Arts – Germany
- Historian specialised in Vernacular Architecture, University Lecturer – Lithuania
- Joiner with additional education in Restoration of Wooden Objects – Germany
- Master of Carpentry specialised in Traditional Handicrafts, Member of the Examination Committee of the Saxon Chamber of Crafts – Germany
- Master of Masonry specialised in Heritage Conservation, Holder of the German Federal Award “Crafts in Heritage Conservation” – Germany
- Master of Masonry specialised in Traditional Techniques – Lithuania
- Stone Mason and Conservator-Restorer specialised in Architectural Surfaces – Austria
- Stone Mason specialised in Traditional Masonry – Slovakia





TRADITIONAL DRY-STONE WALL TECHNIQUES

Belvedere Castle Park Weimar – Part of the UNESCO World Heritage Site “Classical Weimar” / Thuringia
Partner: Klassik Stiftung Weimar / Public authority on national level

Germany





- **Years of implementation of the Training Course:** 2022, 2023, 2024
- **Number of participants:** 41
- **Range of ages of participants:** 19 – 37
- **Nationalities of the participants:** Austria, Belarus, Belgium, Brazil, Bulgaria, China, Colombia, Denmark, Germany, Greece, Honduras, Hungary, India, Iran, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Lebanon, Libya, Mexico, Montenegro, Pakistan, Serbia, South Africa, Spain, Switzerland, Taiwan, Türkiye, United Kingdom, USA
- **Expertise and nationalities of Technical Instructors:** Master of Masonry specialised in heritage conservation, holder of the German Federal Award “Crafts in Heritage Conservation” – Germany / Gardener & Landscape Architect specialised in historic parks and gardens – Germany

Training Course Overview

Located within the UNESCO World Heritage Site “Classical Weimar”, the Belvedere Palace and Gardens offered a historic setting for the “Traditional Crafts in Practice” Training Course on traditional dry-stone techniques. The course focused on conserving the dry-stone walls and pathways of the 19th-century "kitchen garden," originally designed as a functional and ornamental space combining fruit, vegetable, and flower cultivation.

Participants worked under the guidance of a Master of Masonry, engaging in tasks such as stabilising dry-stone walls, carefully selecting and shaping stones to fit in the existing structure, and reconstructing dry-stone walls and other structural elements. They also uncovered and rebuilt historic pathways and stairways, employing methods such as accurate site stratigraphy, alignment, and levelling to ensure structural stability and historical accuracy. These activities required precision in deconstructing unstable sections, cleaning and reusing original materials, and integrating new stones in a way that harmonised with the original construction. All techniques adhered to historically appropriate methods, ensuring authenticity, a minimal environmental impact and long-term durability.

The educational programme included theoretical sessions on principles of sustainable conservation, garden management, and resilience strategies for gardens and parks in the face of climate change. Guided tours of the park provided insights into the governance of UNESCO World Heritage sites and their preservation challenges. While significant progress was achieved, the work remains ongoing, ensuring the long-term preservation and enhancement of this remarkable component of the UNESCO World Heritage site “Classical Weimar”.

TRADITIONAL MASONRY TECHNIQUES & TRADITIONAL VAULTS

Tematín Castle in Trenčín Region
Partner: Tematín Castle Association / Non-governmental organisation on local level

Slovakia





- **Years of implementation of the Training Course:** 2022, 2023, 2024
- **Number of participants:** 22
- **Range of ages of participants:** 21 – 33
- **Nationalities of the participants:** Bulgaria, China, Egypt, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Mexico, Philippines, Slovenia, Spain, Türkiye, United Kingdom, USA
- **Expertise and nationalities of Technical Instructors:** Stone Mason specialised in traditional masonry – Slovakia / Civil Engineer specialised in heritage conservation – Slovakia / Archaeologist and Geologist – Slovakia

Training Course Overview

Tematín Castle, situated atop the Považský Inovec mountains in Slovakia, is a remarkable medieval structure reflecting the region's historical and architectural heritage. As one of Slovakia's most secluded castles, it has been the focus of three editions of "Traditional Crafts in Practice" Training Courses, aimed at both preserving its fabric and providing participants with hands-on experience and theoretical education in traditional masonry techniques.

The courses concentrated on the conservation of Tematín Castle's historic walls and vaults, focusing on techniques such as the preparation and application of lime mortar, traditional masonry methods, the reconstruction of collapsed vaults, and stone carving. Participants were trained in the principles of masonry stabilisation, the careful removal of deteriorated materials, and the integration of new elements using historically appropriate techniques. Under the guidance of expert craftsmen and conservation specialists, they engaged in practical conservation works while deepening their understanding of the castle's architectural evolution, structural changes and broader issues in cultural heritage governance. The educational programme complemented the practical tasks with theoretical sessions on the historical significance of the castle, principles of sustainable heritage conservation, the properties of traditional materials, and others, offering a comprehensive approach to heritage preservation.

While significant progress has been made, conservation works remain ongoing, led by the dedicated craftsmen from the local association. European Heritage Volunteers is expected to continue supporting this important effort, ensuring the long-term preservation of Tematín Castle while equipping future heritage practitioners with the skills to safeguard traditional craftsmanship.

TRADITIONAL LIME MORTARS & PLASTERS

Mauerbach Charterhouse in Lower Austria
Partner: Information and Training Centre for Heritage Conservation of the Federal Heritage Authority of Austria / Educational and Research institution

Austria





- **Years of implementation of the Training Course:** 2022, 2023, 2024
- **Number of participants:** 36
- **Range of ages of participants:** 22 – 38
- **Nationalities of the participants:** Austria, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Egypt, France, Germany, Greece, Indonesia, Iran, Italy, Jordan, Lebanon, Mexico, North Macedonia, Peru, Philippines, Romania, Russian Federation, Serbia, Spain, Türkiye, United Kingdom, USA
- **Expertise and nationalities of Technical Instructors:** Stone Mason & Conservator-Restorer specialised in architectural surfaces – Austria / Architect with additional education in heritage conservation, university lecturer – Austria / Geologist & Researcher on traditional materials for heritage conservation – Austria

Training Course Overview

Three editions of the “Traditional Crafts in Practice” Training Course on traditional lime mortars and plasters took place within the historic setting of the Kartause Mauerbach, a former Carthusian monastery now housing the Information and Training Centre of the Austrian Federal Heritage Authority of Austria. This unique site provided participants with an authentic context for learning and practising traditional lime mortar and plaster techniques, essential for the conservation of historic buildings.

Under the guidance of various experienced conservation specialists, participants engaged in the preparation and application of lime plasters, mastering techniques such as slaking lime, creating traditional mortar mixtures, and applying them to historic surfaces. Tasks included restoring deteriorated sections of walls and façades, ensuring that the original materiality and craftsmanship were preserved. These hands-on activities were complemented by comprehensive theoretical sessions on geological aspects, the properties of lime, its historical use in construction, and sustainable practices in heritage conservation.

The educational programme also introduced participants to broader conservation principles, including the environmental advantages of lime-based materials, which are renewable, breathable, and energy-efficient. Guided tours of the Kartause Mauerbach enriched the learning experience, providing insights into the history of the monastery and its ongoing restoration. By combining practical and theoretical elements, the course equipped participants with skills and knowledge essential for preserving Europe's built heritage while promoting sustainability in conservation practices.

B. TRADITIONAL MORTARS & PLASTERS

CONSERVATION OF HISTORIC MORTARS & PLASTERS

Jewish Heritage Ensemble in Halberstadt in Saxony-Anhalt
Partner: Moses Mendelssohn Academy Foundation Halberstadt / Non-governmental organisation on regional level

Germany





- **Years of implementation of the Training Course:** 2022, 2023, 2024
- **Number of participants:** 32
- **Range of ages of participants**: 18 – 33
- **Nationalities of the participants:** Bangladesh, Canada, Croatia, Czechia, Egypt, France, Germany, India, Iran, Italy, Lithuania, Mexico, Nepal, New Zealand Spain, Taiwan, Türkiye, Ukraine, United Kingdom, USA
- **Expertise and nationalities of Technical Instructors:** Conservator-Restorer specialised in stone, plasters, paintings, and historic surfaces & Architect – Germany / Historian – Germany

Training Course Overview

Three editions of the “Traditional Crafts in Practice” Training Course in Halberstadt focused on the conservation of historical mortars, plasters, and surfaces at three sites within the Jewish Heritage Ensemble, managed by the Moses Mendelssohn Academy. Already from 2028 to 2021, a first period of collaboration with the Academy had centred on the conservation and documentation of Jewish cemeteries, addressing their unique value and preservation challenges. The training courses from 2022 onwards mark a new cycle of activities, now focused on the synagogue ruins, the surrounding garden walls, and the *Sukkah*, expanding the scope of efforts to safeguard Halberstadt’s Jewish heritage.

Participants engaged in restoration efforts at the remains of the Baroque synagogue, where tasks involved masonry joint renewal, colour retouching, and strengthening weathered stone surfaces with supplementary compounds. At the walls surrounding the garden of the *Klaus Synagogue*, which bear carvings left by forced labourers during the Nazi era, the course included detailed documentation, lime mortar preparation, and hot lime application to restore damaged joints. At the museum-integrated *Sukkah* site, participants worked on securing and stabilising historical plasters and historical wallpapers, employing methods to fix and protect fragile surfaces.

The educational programme combined hands-on work with lectures on Jewish heritage, guided tours, and excursions to contextualise the historical significance of the sites. Although substantial progress was achieved, this is an ongoing collaboration, and European Heritage Volunteers will continue supporting the Moses Mendelssohn Academy in future conservation initiatives to ensure the long-term preservation of Halberstadt's Jewish heritage.

B. TRADITIONAL MORTARS & PLASTERS

TRADITIONAL CLAY TECHNIQUES

National Open-Air Museum of Lithuania Rumšiškės in Kaunas County
Partner: National Open-Air Museum of Lithuania / National Museum

Lithuania





- **Years of implementation of the Training Course:** 2022
- **Number of participants:** 13
- **Range of ages of participants:** 22 – 30
- **Nationalities of the participants:** Belarus, Canada, Chile, Croatia, Egypt, Finland, France, Italy, Lithuania, Serbia, South Africa, USA
- **Expertise and nationalities of Technical Instructors:** Master of Masonry specialised in traditional techniques – Lithuania / Architect specialised in heritage conservation – Lithuania / Historian specialised in vernacular architecture, university lecturer – Lithuania

Training Course Overview

The “Traditional Crafts in Practice” Training Course “Traditional Clay Techniques” at the Open-Air Museum of Lithuania in Rumšiškės focused on the conservation and reconstruction of traditional rural structures, with an emphasis on various clay-based techniques and wattle and daub construction. The course centred on the conservation of a replica of a historic forge origining from the 19th century, offering participants an opportunity to engage with crafts and techniques integral to Lithuania’s vernacular architectural heritage.

Under the guidance of conservation specialists, participants began by excavating the foundations of the edifice and carefully assessing its structural condition. Damaged wooden elements were removed and replaced, while the walls were rebuilt using the wattle and daub method. Participants wove wooden lattice frameworks to form the core of the walls, then prepared and applied clay plaster to create a durable and breathable surface. Finally, the floor was created by rammed earth. This process emphasised the sustainable use of natural materials and the historical authenticity of the methods employed.

The educational programme complemented the hands-on work with theoretical sessions on the historical and environmental contexts of wattle and daub and clay techniques, their material properties, and their role in traditional Lithuanian architecture. Guided tours of the Open-Air Museum provided additional insights into the region’s architectural history and rural lifeways. This collaborative effort ensured the preservation of essential skills while contributing to the broader understanding of sustainable heritage conservation.

TRANSLOCATION OF AN ENDANGERED WOODEN BUILDING

„Kleiner Christoph“ at Wachsmannhaus Niesky in Saxony
Partner: Museum Wachsmannhaus Niesky / Local Museum

Germany





- **Years of implementation of the Training Course:** 2023
- **Number of participants:** 13
- **Range of ages of participants:** 20 – 30
- **Nationalities of the participants:** Austria, France, Georgia, Germany, Hong Kong, Mexico, Spain, Switzerland, Türkye, United Kingdom
- **Expertise and nationalities of Technical Instructors:** Master of Carpentry specialised in traditional handicrafts, Member of the examination committee of the Saxon Chamber of Crafts – Germany / Historian & Historian of Arts – Germany

Training Course Overview

The “Traditional Crafts in Practice” Training Course in Niesky, Germany, focused on the conservation and translocation of a historic wooden building from the early 20th century. Set within the context of the Konrad-Wachsmann-Haus Museum, the training course offered participants a unique opportunity to engage with the techniques and principles of early industrial timber construction.

Participants worked on the relocation and reassembling of the "*Kleiner Christoph*" summer arbour, originally located in Görlitz and previously dismantled for preservation. Under the guidance of a master carpenter, they re-erected the structure using traditional carpentry methods. Tasks included detailed documentation, repairing damaged joints, replacing missing beams, and assembling the framework using historically accurate techniques.

The educational programme complemented the practical work with theoretical sessions on early prefabricated wooden architecture, its social and technical context, the innovations pioneered by Christoph & Unmack enterprise in the early 20th century. Guided tours of Niesky and excursions to industrial timber sites in Germany and Poland enriched the learning experience, providing insights into the broader historical significance of the town’s architectural heritage. The translocation was successfully completed, and the structure was reassembled in direct vicinity of the museum, forming part of an ensemble showcasing modern timber architecture from the 1920s. Future collaborations will focus on further projects within the context of early industrial timber architecture and the environmental aspects of wooden architecture.

SAFEGUARDING VERNACULAR ARCHITECTURE THROUGH TRADITIONAL CARPENTRY

Zaroshkë Village in Korçë Region
Partner: Community of inhabitants of Zaroshkë Village / Local association

Albania





- **Years of implementation of the Training Course:** 2024
- **Number of participants:** 14
- **Range of ages of participants:** 20 – 30
- **Nationalities of the participants:** Germany, Türkiye
- **Expertise and nationalities of Technical Instructors:** Master of Carpentry specialised in traditional handicrafts, Member of the examination committee of the Saxon Chamber of Crafts – Germany / Craftsman experienced in traditional wood techniques – Albania / Architect specialised in heritage conservation – Germany

Training Course Overview

The “Traditional Crafts in Practice” Training Course at Zaroshkë Village is part of the ongoing engagement of European Heritage Volunteers around the Great Prespa Lake in Albania, which has been active for several years. It is based on the documentation of vernacular architecture in Zaroshkë Village, conducted by European Heritage Volunteers in collaboration with the Polytechnic University of Valencia. This documentation focused on various typologies of vernacular architecture and endangered traditional crafts and techniques unique to the region. As a result of this documentation, an ensemble of highly endangered vernacular edifices was identified as an optimal site for exemplary conservation interventions. The core of the ensemble is a former stable showcasing various traditional techniques, such as masonry, adobe, and clay techniques, which was at high risk of disappearing because one-third of the building had been without a roof for decades, exposing the adobe walls directly to rain and snow.

During the Training Course “Safeguarding Vernacular Architecture through Traditional Carpentry,” a new roof structure was erected over the endangered part of the building, and the roof structure of the other parts was repaired. The course was led by a Master of Carpentry from Germany, specialising in traditional crafts, in vibrant exchange of traditional knowledge with an over-80-year-old craftsman from the region and other members of the local community.

The participants had the opportunity to learn and practise traditional wood-related skills and directly apply them to rescuing a vernacular building iconic to the village and the region. In direct contact with locals, they learned specific regional techniques and the handling of local materials. In addition, they familiarised themselves with the challenges faced by cultural and vernacular heritage in a region suffering from depopulation, overaging, and the resulting loss of traditional knowledge and skills important not only for cultural heritage but also for the sustainable management of the environment.The 2024 Training Course laid the groundwork for a Training Course in 2025/2026 dedicated to regional roofing techniques.

D. TRADITIONAL ROOFING TECHNIQUES

TRADITIONAL STONE SLAB ROOFING

Traditional Vernacular Ensemble of Gornji Stoliv in Kotor Municipality – Part of the UNESCO World Heritage site Natural and Culturo-Historical Region of Kotor
Partner: Kamelija Stoliv Association / Non-governmental organisation on local level

Montenegro





- **Years of implementation of the Training Course:** 2022, 2023
- **Number of participants:** 37
- **Range of ages of participants:** 20 – 36
- **Nationalities of the participants:** Australia, Austria, Bangladesh, Brazil, Bulgaria, Chile, China, Croatia, Egypt, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Malaysia, Malta, Montenegro, Netherlands, Pakistan, Portugal, Romania, Spain, Syria, Türkiye, USA
- **Expertise and nationalities of Technical Instructors:** Craftsman specialised in vernacular architecture & Architect – Bulgaria / Craftsman experienced in traditional techniques – Montenegro / Architect specialised in heritage conservation – Germany

Training Course Overview

The “Traditional Crafts in Practice” Training Course in Gornji Stoliv, located within the UNESCO World Heritage site “Natural and Culturo-Historical Region of Kotor” focused on the conservation of a traditional stone slab roof within a vernacular ensemble. This traditional technique is representative for the vernacular architecture in the region but in danger to disappear what is why it required specialised craftsmanship to ensure its preservation and authenticity.

Participants worked on the restoration of the roof of a stable, an archetypal element of the village’s historic rural ensemble. Tasks included the careful dismantling of existing stone slabs, cleaning and preparing them for reuse, and finally covering the roof with stone slabs in traditional techniques. Due to the fragile state of the stable, the works included also structural issues as the reconstruction of a collapsed side wall of the edifice using traditional dry-stone and the replacement of the rotten underlying wooden trunks. In accordance with the historic traditions, locally sourced stones and local chestnut trunks were used and applied by traditional methods thus committing to sustainability and authenticity.

The educational programme accompanied the practical work with theoretical sessions on the region’s architectural traditions, the environmental significance of traditional roof structures and stone slab roofs and the use of local materials, as well as the challenges of preserving the authenticity of a cultural landscape exposed to rapidly increasing mass tourism. Guided tours and expert-led discussions contextualised the work within broader heritage management frameworks. With the conservation tasks completed and the extraordinary active engagement of the local heritage association, the training course serves as a model for tradition-based sustainable conservation of vernacular architecture.

CONSERVATION OF A ROOF STRUCTURE & A SHINGLED ROOF FROM 18TH CENTURY

Open Air Museum of the Ore Mountains in Seiffen in Saxony – Part of the UNESCO World Heritage site Erzgebirge/Krušnohoří Mining Region
Partner: Open Air Museum of the Ore Mountains / Local Museum

Germany





- **Years of implementation of the Training Course:** 2023
- **Number of participants:** 14
- **Range of ages of participants:** 19 – 34
- **Nationalities of the participants:** Chile, France, Germany, Honduras, India, Mexico, Serbia, Slovakia, Spain, Syria, Türkiye, USA
- **Expertise and nationalities of Technical Instructors:** Joiner with additional education in restoration of wooden objects – Germany / Carpenter specialised in heritage conservation – Germany

Training Course Overview

In 2023, a "Traditional Crafts in Practice" Training Course dedicated to traditional shingle roofing techniques took place at the Open-Air Museum of the Ore Mountains in Seiffen, part of the transboundary UNESCO World Heritage site "Erzgebirge/Krušnohoří Mining Region". The course focused on conserving the *Flößerwohnhaus* (the Rafter's House), an 18th-century structure tied to the region's historical wood and mining industries.

The participants worked on the *Flößerwohnhaus'* roof structure, replacing damaged beams and covering the roof with wooden shingles using traditional techniques. They gained practical experience in shaping and placing shingles while also learning about the entire production process, from sourcing the wood to crafting shingles, guided by skilled heritage professionals. In addition, the course also highlighted Seiffen's famous wooden toy-making tradition. The international group explored a rare technique of toy production from wood that makes use of wooden turning-wheels powered by a water system technology originated in the Ore Mountains, demonstrated by one of the few remaining artisans skilled in this craft.

The educational programme featured lectures, guided visits, and excursions to key heritage sites related to historic mining and traditional wood-related crafts on both the German and Czech sides of the Ore Mountains, providing a broader context for the region's cultural and historical significance. The course exemplified the integration of practical skill development with the preservation of tangible and intangible heritage.

E. SPECIFIC REGIONAL TRADITIONAL TECHNIQUES

TRADITIONAL WOODEN FENCES

National Open-Air Museum of Lithuania in Rumšiškės in Kaunas County
Partner: National Open-Air Museum of Lithuania / National Museum

Lithuania





- **Years of implementation of the Training Course:** 2023, 2024
- **Number of participants:** 21
- **Range of ages of participants:** 22 – 33
- **Nationalities of the participants:** Australia, Austria, Belgium, Egypt, France, Germany, Italy, Lithuania, Mexico, Morocco, Türkiye, United Kingdom, USA
- **Expertise and nationalities of Technical Instructors:** Carpenter with additional education in heritage conservation – Lithuania / Architect specialised in heritage conservation – Lithuania / Historian specialised in vernacular architecture, university lecturer – Lithuania

Training Course Overview

The two editions of the “Traditional Crafts in Practice” Training Course at the Open-Air Museum of Lithuania in Rumšiškės focused on the reconstruction of traditional wooden fences, a distinctive element of vernacular architecture in Lithuanian rural landscapes. These fences, essential to the character and functionality of historic homesteads, were rebuilt using authentic methods and locally sourced materials. Thus, the training course did not only contribute to the conservation of the fences as tangible heritage but in first line to the awareness of the traditional techniques of fence-making as intangible heritage and their preservation, transmission, and dissemination.

During the training courses Participants undertook hands-on activities, including splitting logs, shaping stakes, and weaving branches, to recreate fences representative of various regional styles. The work emphasised the craftsmanship and ingenuity of these traditional techniques, which are at risk of being lost. Under the guidance of heritage professionals from the museum, the participants explored the cultural relevance of these structures, their connection to the local environment, and their historical role in rural communities.

The educational programme included guided tours of the museum, featuring reconstructed buildings and exhibits from Lithuania’s various ethnographic regions. These sessions offered a deeper understanding of the interaction between natural materials and architectural traditions, enriching the participants’ perspectives on sustainable heritage conservation. The tasks were successfully accomplished, completing the reconstruction of the wooden fences; however, the collaboration will continue, as the museum houses numerous structures requiring periodic refurbishment, providing an ongoing and valuable opportunity to teach these traditional techniques to future groups of young heritage practitioners.

RESCUE AND CONSERVATION OF HIGHLY ENDANGERED FRESCOES

Hermit Cave Churches at Prespa Lake in Korçë Region
Partner: National Agency of Protected Areas of the Republic of Albania / Public authority at national level

Albania





- **Years of implementation of the Training Course:** 2022
- **Number of participants:** 12
- **Range of ages of participants:** 22 – 33
- **Nationalities of the participants:** Austria, France, Iran, Jordan, Malta, Mexico, Russian Federation, Serbia, Slovenia, Spain, Switzerland
- **Expertise and nationalities of Technical Instructors:** Conservator-Restorer specialised in wall paintings and mosaics, university lecturer – North Macedonia / Conservator-Restorer specialised in wall paintings – Switzerland / Conservator-Restorer specialised in wall paintings, university lecturer – Croatia / Stone Mason specialised in traditional masonry – Slovakia

Training Course Overview

The “Traditional Crafts in Practice” Training Course at the Hermit Cave Churches at Great Prespa Lake in the Korçë Region of Albania focused on urgent rescue and conservation interventions for the highly endangered 14th-century frescoes covering their interior and exterior walls. Located along the lake's eastern shore, these small churches are a unique blend of cultural heritage, characterised by their integration into natural caves and adorned with frescoes of exceptional artistic quality.

Due to the high level of endangerment of the frescoes and the logistical challenges of their location—perched on a perpendicular rock twelve metres above the lakeshore and accessible only by boat—the training course was led by four Technical Instructors from four European countries, each contributing specialised expertise. Under their guidance, participants first consolidated the structural elements of the cave churches, including repairing deteriorated stone walls enclosing the caves. These tasks involved traditional masonry techniques, the preparation and application of lime mortar using sand from the lakeshore, and careful integration of the repairs to ensure authenticity.

Subsequently, the frescoes were meticulously documented, and urgent conservation measures were carried out. These efforts included fixing plaster that had detached from the rocks, stabilising and consolidating the frescoes, and sealing cracks. These interventions successfully prevented further deterioration caused by exposure to the elements, although additional restoration work is required and will be undertaken in a future training course.

The 2022 Training Course combined the urgent rescue of heritage at acute risk of loss with providing restoration-conservation students with invaluable practical experience complemented by comprehensive theoretical education.

CONSERVATION AND RESTORATION OF FRESCOS

Capela de São Brás Portel in Alentejo Region
Partner: Spira – Revitalização Patrimonial / Non-governmental organisation at national level

Portugal





- **Years of implementation of the Training Course:** 2022, 2023
- **Number of participants:** 29
- **Range of ages of participants:** 21 – 33
- **Nationalities of the participants:** Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Bulgaria, Chile, Germany, Greece, Iran, Latvia, Malta, Nicaragua, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Spain, Taiwan, United Kingdom
- **Expertise and nationalities of Technical Instructors:** Conservator-Restorer specialised in wall paintings – Portugal / Conservator-Restorer specialised in wall paintings – Serbia

Training Course Overview

The two editions of the “Traditional Crafts in Practice” Training Course in Portel, Portugal, focused on the conservation and restoration of the frescoes within the 16th-century Capela de São Brás, a chapel of noteworthy cultural and artistic value in the Alentejo Region. As part of the "*Rota do Fresco,"* a regionally driven heritage-awareness initiative dedicated to preserving mural paintings across Alentejo Region, the course provided participants with an immersive experience in both practical and theoretical aspects of fresco conservation and restoration.

The participants worked under the guidance of two experienced conservators-restorers, one with expertise in the cultural heritage of the region and related fresco techniques, and the other with an extensive international background and experiences. The tasks included the careful removal of overlying limewash to reveal hidden frescoes, stabilising and consolidating damaged sections, and retouching surfaces using historically accurate methods and natural materials such as lime, local river sand, and pigments used in the 16th and 17th centuries. The work ensured the integrity and longevity of these intricate wall paintings while preserving their historical authenticity.

The educational programme expanded on the practical tasks with workshops and lectures on Alentejo's unique fresco painting tradition, sustainability in heritage practices, and the challenges for the region and its cultural heritage posed by climate change, particularly desertification in the region. Guided tours to other sites decorated with frescoes enriched the participants’ understanding of the broader cultural and historical significance of the technique.

The training course successfully completed its goals, contributing to the conservation of this heritage gem. Beyond this, the two editions of the course played an important role in raising awareness among the local population about the value of the historic frescoes in the region's small chapels, many of which lack formal protection as heritage sites. The involvement of young heritage professionals from abroad highlighted the cultural importance of the region's heritage, fostering a deeper appreciation within the local community.

CONSERVATION AND RESTORATION OF TRADITIONAL SHEEPSKIN GARMENTS

ASTRA National Museum in Sibiu County
Partner: ASTRA National Museum Complex / National Museum

Romania





- **Years of implementation of the Training Course:** 2022, 2023
- **Number of participants:** 19
- **Range of ages of participants:** 22 – 34
- **Nationalities of the participants:** Canada, Chile, Croatia, Egypt, Germany, Honduras, Montenegro, Poland, Romania, Spain, Taiwan, USA
- **Expertise and nationalities of Technical Instructors:**
- Conservator-Restorer specialised in textile and leather – Romania / Conservator-Restorer specialised in textile – Romania

Training Course Overview

The two editions of the “Traditional Crafts in Practice” Training Course in Sibiu, Romania, were designed to provide participants with in-depth knowledge of the processes involved in safeguarding authentic traditional garments that are part of the collection housed in the Astra National Museum Complex. These garments, including sheepskin coats and folk costumes, represent the cultural and artisanal heritage of the region.

The participants engaged in practical activities focused on cleaning, stabilising, and repairing delicate materials. They explored techniques for preserving intricate embroidery, reinforcing weakened fabrics, and implementing preventive measures for long-term care. The focus was on understanding traditional crafts, techniques, and methods and how these can inform conservation efforts.

The educational programme incorporated workshops and discussions on the cultural significance of traditional clothing in Romanian heritage. Participants gained insights into sustainable approaches to textile care within museum settings and the broader implications for preserving cultural heritage.

Through these courses, the participants developed valuable practical skills while contributing to the preservation and appreciation of Romania’s intangible traditions and, more broadly, to the recognition and valorisation of traditional handcrafts in general, ensuring these artefacts remain a source of cultural identity and education for future generations.

CONSERVATION AND RESTORATION OF WALL PAINTINGS

Lauenstein Castle in Saxony – Part of the UNESCO World Heritage site “Erzgebirge/Krušnohoří Mining Region”
Partner: Museum of the Eastern Ore Mountains Lauenstein Castle / Local Museum

Germany





- **Years of implementation of the Training Course:** 2023, 2024
- **Number of participants:** 23
- **Range of ages of participants:** 20 – 39
- **Nationalities of the participants:** Austria, Brazil, Honduras, Latvia, Netherlands, Poland, Serbia, Spain, Türkye, Ukraine, United Kingdom, USA
- **Expertise and nationalities of Technical Instructors:** Conservator-Restorer specialised in wall paintings – Germany / Conservator-Restorer – Germany / Conservator-Restorer specialised in wall paintings and mosaics, university lecturer – North Macedonia

Training Course Overview

The two editions of the “Traditional Crafts in Practice” Training Course at Lauenstein Castle, focused on the conservation and restoration of wall paintings from the Renaissance and 19th-century periods. These intricate works, located within the castle’s main building and as well as a former economic edifice, provided participants with a unique opportunity to engage in specialised tasks of heritage conservation-restoration.

Under the guidance of experienced conservators-restorers, the participants carried out interventions to stabilise and conserve these historic paintings. Tasks included the consolidation of disassociated plaster layers, the desalination of affected surfaces, and the removal of overlying limewash to uncover hidden Renaissance motifs. The work was conducted using traditional materials, to ensure compatibility with the original techniques and materials.

The educational programme complemented these practical efforts with theoretical sessions on the historical context of Lauenstein Castle and on wall painting conservation and restoration methods as well as a visit to the restoration workshops and the laboratories of the Saxon State Office for the Preservation of Monuments. Guided tours and excursions to related heritage sites in the Ore Mountains enriched the participants’ understanding of the interconnectedness of the region’s architectural, cultural, and mining heritage.

As a result of the first two editions of the Training Course, a permanent collaboration between European Heritage Volunteers and the Saxon State Office for the Preservation of Monuments was established. This partnership has led to annual Training Courses on historic wall paintings at Lauenstein Castle, contributing to the preservation of its rich cultural legacy while providing valuable on-site experiences and training opportunities for young heritage professionals.

CONSERVATION AND RESTORATION OF GRAVESTONES

Former Garrison Cemetery Hamelin in Lower Saxony
Partner: Hamelin Municipality / Public Authority

Germany





- **Years of implementation of the Training Course:** 2023, 2024
- **Number of participants:** 18
- **Range of ages of participants:** 21 – 37
- **Nationalities of the participants:** Australia, Bangladesh, Belarus, Brazil, Croatia, Egypt, France, Honduras, India, Montenegro, Portugal, Serbia, Slovenia, Spain, United Kingdom, Uruguay, USA
- **Expertise and nationalities of Technical Instructors:** Conservator-Restorer specialised in stone, plasters, paintings, and historic surfaces & Architect – Germany / Architect specialised in heritage conservation – Germany

Training Course Overview

Two editions of the “Traditional Crafts in Practice” Training Course “Conservation and Restoration of Gravestones” were held at the Historic Garrison Cemetery in Hamelin, Lower Saxony, Germany – a site notorious for its ornamented gravestones that reflect exceptional artistic and historical value. Established in the 17th century, this cemetery serves as a tangible record of the region’s military and cultural history, housing gravestones crafted by both local and nationally renowned stonemasons.

The participants engaged in precision-driven conservation activities targeting the gravestones’ preservation. They removed biological growth such as moss, lichen, and algae using brushes, micro-steamers, and compresses tailored to the fragility of the surfaces. Techniques for stabilising stone included crack repairs with conservation-grade fillers and consolidation methods designed to maintain the material's structural integrity. The training emphasised the preparation and application of appropriate materials, adhering to principles of compatibility, reversibility, and minimal intervention. Detailed documentation processes, incorporating both high-resolution photography and methodical written records, were important to ensuring accurate data for future conservation and research purposes.

The accompanying educational programme provided valuable context, offering guided tours of Hamelin's historic landmarks and excursions that highlighted the region’s heritage. Discussions and theoretical sessions further enriched the learning experience by exploring conservation principles and the importance of preserving burial sites as cultural artefacts. Led by heritage professionals with different specialisation, the course equipped the participants with critical skills and techniques.

After two editions, the tasks at the Garrison Cemetery were successfully completed, but collaboration with Hamelin Municipality will continue at other heritage sites in the city.

CONSERVATION OF HISTORIC CEILINGS

Lielstraupe Castle in Straupe Village in Cēsis Municipality
Partner: Friends of Lielstraupe Castle Association / Non-governmental organisation on local level

Latvia





- **Years of implementation of the Training Course:** 2024
- **Number of participants:** 12
- **Range of ages of participants:** 22 – 33
- **Nationalities of the participants:** Austria, China, Egypt, France, Germany, Italy, Latvia, Morocco, Netherlands, United Kingdom, USA, Venezuela
- **Expertise and nationalities of Technical Instructors:** Conservator-Restorer specialised in historic surfaces of architectural heritage – Serbia / Conservator-Restorer of historic heritage & Master of Crafts – Latvia

Training Course Overview

The 2024 “Traditional Crafts in Practice” Training Course at Lielstraupe Castle focused on the conservation and restoration of historical surfaces, targeting the richly decorated ceilings in the castle’s main hall. The castle, an 800-year-old architectural and cultural landmark, consists of medieval and post-medieval construction phases and combines traditional techniques of various epochs. Lielstraupe Castle is one of the most important and iconic heritage sites in Latvia, carrying significant meaning for the local community.

The training course, led by a conservator-restorer from Latvia and another from Serbia, aimed to uncover the original colours of the middle section of the ceiling in the main hall as a first step toward preparing the room for future use by the local community. Simultaneously, it provided young heritage professionals with valuable practical on-site experience and conservation-restoration skills. Participants undertook various conservation tasks, starting with the careful mechanical removal of several layers of coating that obscured the original painted layers. This step was followed by undusting, precise mechanical cleaning, and consolidation of the painted surfaces with nano lime-based preparations, ensuring compatibility with the original material. Cracks and physical gaps were repaired using lime mortars tailored to match the physicochemical properties of the historical layers. Documentation, including photographic and written records, was maintained throughout the process, ensuring a comprehensive record of the intervention.

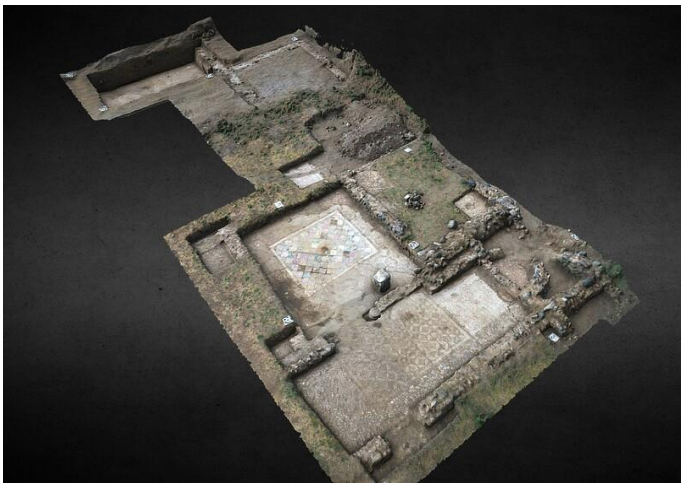
In addition to the hands-on tasks, the educational programme included a series of lectures exploring the historical significance of the castle, along with visits to related heritage sites in the region. During the traditional Lielstraupe Castle Festival, a public presentation showcased the ongoing conservation process and the results achieved, offering insight into the work for the local community and guests from across Latvia.

The tasks planned for 2024 were finalised successfully, and the works at the remaining parts of the main hall’s ceiling will be completed during another training course in 2025.

CONSERVATION OF ROMAN MOSAICS

Archaeological Site “Stakina Chesma” – Ruins of a Roman villa in Valandovo in North-Eastern Region
Partner: National Institute for the Protection of Culture Monuments and Museum – Strumica / National Heritage Authority

North Macedonia





- **Years of implementation of the Training Course:** 2024
- **Number of participants:** 8
- **Range of ages of participants:** 22 – 37
- **Nationalities of the participants:** France, Germany, India, Poland, Serbia, Spain, United Kingdom
- **Expertise and nationalities of Technical Instructors:** Conservator-Restorer specialised in wall paintings and mosaics, university lecturer – North Macedonia / Archaeologist – North Macedonia

Training Course Overview

The “Traditional Crafts in Practice” Training Course at the archaeological site “Stakina Cheshma” in Valandovo focused on conserving original Roman mosaics dating from the 3rd and 4th centuries. The site, the location of a former Roman villa with seven fully excavated rooms each featuring intricate mosaic floors, provide a fascinating setting for a training course dedicated to the documentation and conservation of ancient mosaics.

Under the guidance of a highly regarded restorer-conservator specialised in Roman mosaics, the participants engaged directly with the mosaics. After meticulous documentation of the mosaics and their state of conservation, a detailed conservation concept was developed. Following, the mosaics were cleaned employing non-destructive techniques such as using spatulas, syringes, dental tools, and scalpels to remove encrustations. Fragile areas were stabilised applying conservation-grade materials tailored to the mosaics' specific conditions, adhering to principles of minimal intervention and material compatibility. These activities included filling lacunae and protecting mosaic edges to ensure long-term preservation.

The educational programme complemented the practical activities with lectures, guided tours, and discussions, providing participants with insights into the site's history and the principles of mosaic conservation. The simultaneous excavation of other rooms in the former villa further enriched the training course by incorporating the perspectives of archaeologists and familiarising participants with excavation methodologies. Visits to other archaeological sites of the region, including Roman fortresses and baths, enriched the participants’ understanding of the region’s Roman heritage.

The task of the Training Course was successfully finalised, and a similar Training Course for 2025 is already in preparation. European Heritage Volunteers and the National Institute for the Protection of Cultural Monuments and Museum Strumica plan a continuous collaboration to ensure the site's long-term research and preservation.

DOCUMENTATION AND STRATIGRAPHIC RESEARCH OF A HERITAGE ENSEMBLE

Lielstraupe Castle in Straupe Village in Cēsis Municipality
Partner: Friends of Lielstraupe Castle Association / Non-governmental organisation on local level

Latvia





- **Years of implementation of the Training Course:** 2023
- **Number of participants:** 12
- **Range of ages of participants:** 21 – 34
- **Nationalities of the participants:** Austria, Belarus, Belgium, Brazil, Egypt, France, Germany, India, Poland, Spain, USA
- **Expertise and nationalities of Technical Instructors:** Architect with additional education in heritage conservation, university professor – Spain / Architect specialised in heritage conservation – Germany / Architect specialised in cultural heritage – Latvia

Training Course Overview

The 2023 “Traditional Crafts in Practice” Training Course focused on the architectural documentation and evaluation of the large ensemble, with the aim of developing recommendations for its conservation and revitalisation. The castle, spanning eight centuries of history and combining nine construction phases, features intricate stratigraphic layers, being with its foundations, cellars, and tower walls among the oldest heritage remains in Latvia. After having been used for several decades as hospital the ensemble had been overhanded in 2023 to the local municipality.

The local-community-based Friends of Lielstraupe Castle Association saw the potential which the site bears for the local and regional development as well as the financial burden to conserve, restore, and manage such a large site and asked European Heritage Volunteers to accompany and support the process of concept development of the ensemble, at the same time providing extraordinary on-site training opportunities for emerging heritage professionals.

Led by two experienced conservation architects, the participants undertook a comprehensive inventory of all rooms of the castle as well as of key architectural elements such as plasters, floors, ceilings, doors, and staircases. This process established a chronology of the castle’s historical phases and a taxonomy of its structural components. Participants evaluated the building’s substance with a focus on chronology, identity, and authenticity, ultimately producing targeted conservation recommendations for individual rooms and overarching strategies for the entire complex.

The educational programme of the Training Course included lectures, guided tours of the castle and village, and a full-day excursion to related heritage sites in the region. The training concluded with a public presentation of preliminary results during the traditional Lielstraupe Castle Festival, fostering engagement with the local community. The task was successfully completed, and collaboration with local partners continued in 2024 with a Training Course focusing on conservation-restoration of the main hall.

DOCUMENTATION AND AWARENESS RAISING OF VERNACULAR ARCHITECTURE

Mandritsa Village in Haskovo Region
Partner: Meshtra – Traditional Knowledge and Crafts / Non-governmental organisation on national level

Bulgaria





- **Years of implementation of the Training Course:** 2024
- **Number of participants:** 11
- **Range of ages of participants:** 25 – 37
- **Nationalities of the participants:** Argentina, Bulgaria, Egypt, France, Germany, Greece, India, Mexico, United Kingdom
- **Expertise and nationalities of Technical Instructors:** Architect specialised in cultural heritage – Bulgaria / Architect specialised in vernacular architecture – Bulgaria

Training Course Overview

The “Traditional Crafts in Practice” Training Course in Mandritsa Village, Bulgaria, focused on the architectural survey and documentation of traditional earthen vernacular architecture. Mandritsa, known for its 17th-century origins and unique Bulgarian Revival-style adobe and brick houses, provided an ideal setting for participants to explore heritage sites in a rural area which are formally not protected by law and are therefore endangered to be lost.

Led by architects and heritage professionals from European Heritage Volunteers and the Association Meshtra – Traditional Knowledge and Crafts, the participants conducted detailed surveys to document the architectural and cultural characteristics of the village’s traditional buildings. They identified and analysed construction techniques, material use, and the integration of the structures within the broader cultural landscape. Special attention was given to distinguishing Mandritsa's architectural features from those of neighbouring villages, highlighting their unique local identity. The course culminated in the creation of a comprehensive report, including written, drawn, and photographed documentation alongside recommendations for conserving and restoring vernacular buildings. This resource was designed to assist local residents in preserving their architectural heritage while addressing potential future developments.

The educational programme complemented the practical work with theoretical inputs, guided visits, and an excursion to nearby sites, contextualising Mandritsa within the cultural heritage of the region.

The Training Course successfully raised awareness of the village's heritage among the local community as well as the regional administration, fostering dialogue on strategies for safeguarding non-protected cultural assets. For the participants, the Training Course provided unique opportunities to learn documentation techniques as well as to familiarise with buildings in traditional clay techniques, their characteristics and the specific risks they feature due to lack of maintenance. In continuation of the 2024 Training Course, another Training Course is in preparation for 2026 aiming to provide skills in clay-related techniques while rescuing one of Mandritsa’s most endangered vernacular buildings.

DOCUMENTATION AND INTERPRETATION OF INDUSTRIAL HERITAGE

La Palma Underground Mill in Mgarr Municipality
Partner: University of Malta – Faculty for Built Environment, Department of Conservation and Built Heritage / Public University

Malta





- **Years of implementation of the Training Course:** 2024
- **Number of participants:** 15
- **Range of ages of participants:** 20 – 29
- **Nationalities of the participants:** Bangladesh, China, Czechia, Germany, India, Italy, Lithuania, Malta, Mexico, Poland, Portugal, Russian Federation, Spain
- **Expertise and nationalities of Technical Instructors:** Architect specialised in heritage conservation, university professor – Malta

Training Course Overview

The “Traditional Crafts in Practice” Training Course at the La Palma Underground Mill in Mgarr, Malta, addressed the documentation and preservation of industrial heritage – an often-underrepresented category of cultural heritage in a country famous for its rich and diverse cultural heritage. The course emphasised the technical skills required to record, assess, and interpret such sites, providing the participants with specialised training in an area frequently overlooked in favour of more prominent heritage types. The La Palma mill, a Cold War-era underground flour mill, is one of the few surviving examples of its kind in Malta, originally designed to ensure food security during wartime but now at risk of being forgotten. Raising awareness about the La Palma mill is a step forward to emphasise the fragility of Malta's industrial heritage and the urgent need to document and conserve these hidden remnants before they are lost to neglect or modern development.

Under the guidance of a conservation architect and professor from the University of Malta, participants conducted an architectural survey and created a detailed inventory of the La Palma Underground Mill. With no prior documentation available, they applied advanced techniques to catalogue structural features, evaluate conservation needs, and propose stabilisation measures for long-term preservation. Key skills that were put into practice included assessing environmental impacts, such as humidity and ventilation, and devising practical solutions for mitigating these challenges.

The participants also explored methods for enhancing public engagement with industrial heritage, developing interpretive strategies such as signage and visitor experiences to contextualise the mill within Malta’s broader heritage landscape. Complementing the technical work, site visits and excursions enriched their understanding of Malta’s historical context. The training provided a robust foundation for the mill's conservation and public reinterpretation, equipping participants with valuable expertise in preserving and promoting industrial heritage.

H. ARCHAEOLOGICAL TECHNIQUES

EXCAVATION AND DOCUMENTATION TECHNIQUES

Palauet Nolla in Meliana in the Valencia Autonomous Community
Partner: Centro Investigación y Difusión Cerámica Nolla / Research Institution /

Spain





- **Years of implementation of the Training Course:** 2024
- **Number of participants:** 14
- **Range of ages of participants:** 20 – 30
- **Nationalities of the participants:** Brazil, Croatia, Czechia, Germany, Italy, Lithuania, Mexico, Poland, Serbia, Spain, Türkiye, Ukraine, United Kingdom, USA
- **Expertise and nationalities of Technical Instructors:** Architect specialised in heritage conservation and heritage education – Spain / Architect specialised in heritage conservation – France / Archaeologist – Spain

Training Course Overview

The “Traditional Crafts in Practice” Training Course at Palauet Nolla in Meliana, Spain, provided the participants with an opportunity to engage in archaeological excavation and documentation focused on the 19th-century ceramic mosaic elements produced by the famous Nolla factory. This Training Course placed an emphasis in the importance of industrial heritage in the context of the historical, economical, and cultural development of the region of Valencia.

Led by experienced archaeologists and conservation professionals, the participants were involved in the systematic excavation of backfill material surrounding the Palauet Nolla, originating from the remains of the former ceramic factory destroyed several decades ago. This area, filled with remnants from the demolition of the factory structures, contained a wealth of artefacts, including mosaic fragments, bricks, and decorative elements. The participants applied archaeological techniques to carefully extract, document, and catalogue these findings. They gained practical skills in excavation, stratigraphic recording, and conservation analysis, contributing to a growing collection of Nolla mosaic elements, which were widely exported in the 19th century across northern Spain, France, and beyond. Additionally, participants contributed to creating a comprehensive catalogue of findings, laying the groundwork for future conservation efforts aimed at preserving Nolla-decorated structures.

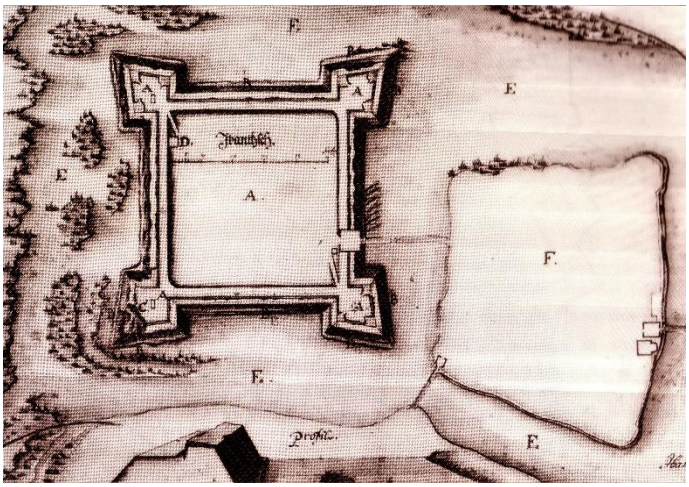
The educational programme included theoretical sessions on archaeological methodologies, ceramic production, and conservation practices, as well as guided visits to industrial heritage sites in the region. Due to various public events the Training Course also strengthened ties between the local community and their heritage.

This course not only enhanced the participants' technical expertise in archaeology but also provided valuable insights into the tile production process, including material mixtures, technical details, firing techniques, and the materials used for colouring. These findings laid the groundwork for a 2025 Training Course focused on restoring sections of the richly decorated interior of Palauet Nolla, adorned with a diverse array of tiles.

EXCAVATION TECHNIQUES AND PROCEEDING OF FINDINGS

Remains of the fortress of Ivanić-Grad in Zagreb County
Partner: Prijatelji Baštine – Amici Hereditatis Ivanić-Grad / Non-governmental organisation on local level

Croatia





- **Years of implementation of the Training Course:** 2023, 2024
- **Number of participants:** 15
- **Range of ages of participants:** 20 – 37
- **Nationalities of the participants:** Austria, Canada, China, Croatia, Iceland, Indonesia, Serbia, Spain, United Kingdom, Italy, USA, Poland, Australia
- **Expertise and nationalities of Technical Instructors:** Archaeologist – Croatia / Archaeologist – Croatia

Training Course Overview

The two editions of the “Traditional Crafts in Practice” Training Course in Ivanić-Grad, Croatia, focused on the archaeological excavation and analysis of the remains of a 16th-century wooden fortress. The participants gained hands-on experience in excavation techniques, stratigraphic analysis, and the documentation of material culture from the 16th to 18th centuries. The work aimed to uncover the site’s historical layers and expand understanding of the fortress’s role in the region’s defence and development during the Ottoman period and beyond.

Led by experienced archaeologists and local experts, the participants practised essential archaeological skills, including site mapping, cartographic and archival research, and stratigraphic excavation. They worked methodically to recover and document artefacts such as ceramic vessels, glass fragments, and metal objects. These finds were processed through cataloguing, basic conservation techniques, and photographic documentation. Participants also learned to assess stratigraphic layers to interpret the site’s historical development and architectural evolution.

The educational programme complemented fieldwork with theoretical workshops on archaeological heritage management, material culture analysis, and modern excavation methodologies. Guided visits to regional museums and heritage sites provided additional context, while community engagement activities allowed participants to present their findings and highlight the significance of Ivanić-Grad’s cultural heritage. The courses equipped participants with archaeology-related technical expertise and a deeper understanding of heritage conservation and its role in preserving historical narratives.

Since the remaining areas of the fortress that were not covered by 19th- and 20th-century buildings have been successfully excavated and all possible information has been gathered, the collaboration with the local partner will shift focus starting in 2025. It will centre on the endangered vernacular architecture of villages in the immediate vicinity of Ivanić-Grad, which are now administratively part of the city.

RESULTS AND OUTREACH: EVALUATION MECHANISMS

OVERVIEW OF EVALUATION REPORTS FROM PARTICIPANTS

At the conclusion of each “Traditional Crafts in Practice” Training Course, participants are invited to complete a detailed evaluation form, enabling them to provide structured feedback on various aspects of their experience. This feedback mechanism is integral to ensuring the continuous improvement of the Training Courses and maintaining high standards of quality and participant satisfaction.

The evaluation begins with an assessment of the heritage site itself, focusing on its suitability for the learning objectives and the participants' experiences working within its context. Participants are also asked to evaluate the safety measures implemented on the working site, ensuring their well-being throughout the course. Lodging conditions and the quality of food provided as well as dietary options are reviewed, reflecting the importance of a comfortable and supportive environment.

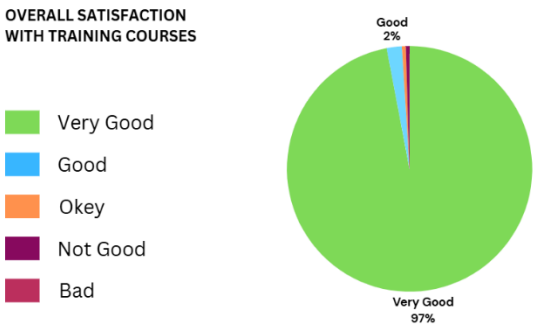
The educational programme forms a significant focus of the evaluation. Participants share their perspectives on the practical and theoretical learning components, the quality of technical instruction provided, and the support offered by local partners. They also assess the group coordination by the designated coordinators and the effectiveness of collaborative efforts.

In addition, the form addresses the inclusivity of the programme, including gender balance and the international representation within the group. Finally, participants evaluate the overall results achieved, providing a comprehensive overview of their experiences and areas for future enhancement.

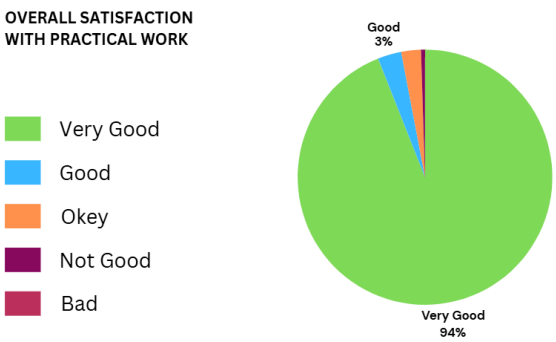
[A SAMPLE OF TE CONTENT OF THE EVALUATION FORMS PROVIDED AS AN APPENDIX]

General overview of the “Traditional Crafts in Practice” Training Courses for the years 2022, 2023, 2024 sourced from 419 Evaluation Forms:

Overall Satisfaction with the Training Courses	
Very Good	97%
Good	2%
Okey	0.5%
Not Good	0.5%
Bad	0%
	100%

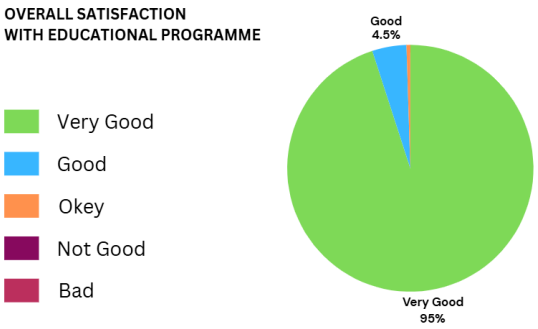


Overall Satisfaction with the Practical Work	
Very Good	94%
Good	3%
Okey	1%
Not Good	0.5%
Bad	0%
	100%

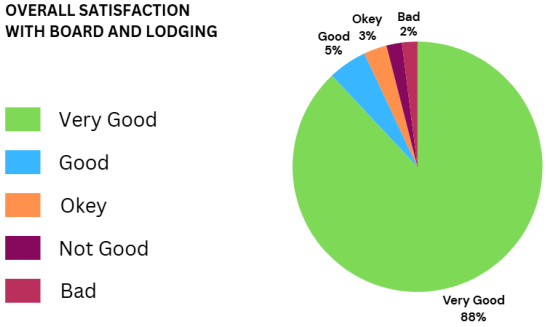


RESULTS AND OUTREACH: EVALUATION MECHANISMS

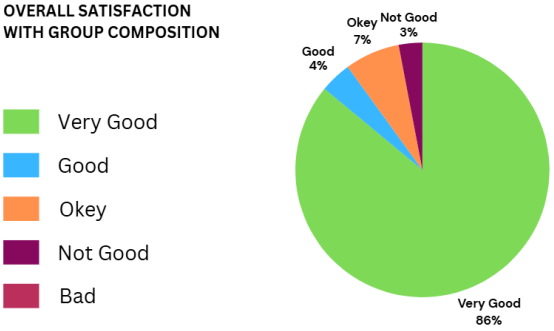
Overall Satisfaction with the Educational Programme	
Very Good	95%
Good	4.5%
Okey	0.5%
Not Good	0.0%
Bad	0%
	100%



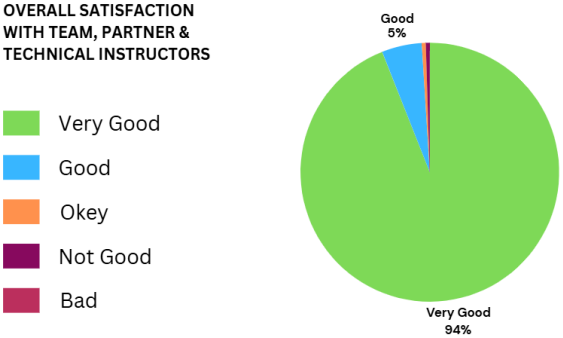
Overall Satisfaction with Board and Lodging	
Very Good	88%
Good	5%
Okey	3%
Not Good	2%
Bad	2%
	100%



Overall Satisfaction with the Group Composition	
Very Good	86%
Good	4%
Okey	7%
Not Good	3%
Bad	0%
	100%



Overall Satisfaction with the Team, Partner & Technical Instructors	
Very Good	94%
Good	5%
Okey	0.5%
Not Good	0.5%
Bad	0%
	100%



RESULTS AND OUTREACH: ANNUAL PROJECT PARTNERS MEETINGS AND CONFERENCES

ANNUAL PROJECT PARTNERS MEETINGS: ANALYSING IMPACTS, BEST PRACTICES, AND CHALLENGES IN TRAINING COURSE IMPLEMENTATION

The annual Project Partners Meetings, organised by European Heritage Volunteers, bring together members of the European Heritage Volunteers Network to evaluate and enhance the organisation's training courses and other activities. These meetings provide a structured platform for representatives of partner organisations, institutions, and initiatives across Europe to exchange and collaborate on improving heritage education and conservation practices.

Discussions focus on assessing the outcomes of recent Training Courses, incorporating feedback from participants and partners to identify successes and areas for improvement. Attendees share experiences, best practices, and innovative ideas to refine methodologies and ensure alignment with the programme's objectives and quality standards. The meetings also encourage networking and collaboration among network members, strengthening cross-border cooperation and resource sharing within the heritage sector.

ANNUAL CONFERENCES: SHOWCASING TRAINING COURSES' OUTCOMES AND ENCOURAGING INTERNATIONAL HERITAGE DIALOGUE

European Heritage Volunteers organises annual conferences to highlight best practices in heritage education and heritage-related volunteering across Europe. These events provide platforms to present the outcomes of the Training Courses and encourage dialogue among heritage professionals.

In 2022, the conference was held on October 25th at the Information and Training Centre for Heritage Conservation of the Federal Heritage Authority of Austria at Mauerbach Charterhouse. Organised in collaboration with Burghauptmannschaft Österreich and the Federal Heritage Authority of Austria, the event was themed "Heritage Skills – Past, Present and Future." It examined the evolution of traditional heritage skills and their application in contemporary conservation, with presentations and discussions featuring practitioners and researchers.

The 2023 conference took place on October 6th at the Open-Air Museum of Lithuania in Rumšiškės. Titled "Heritage and People," the event, supported by the Ministry of Culture of Lithuania, explored the connection between communities and heritage. It showcased the role of public engagement in heritage conservation and shared successful case studies.

The 2024 Training Courses will be topic of the next conference focusing of the European dimension of safeguarding traditional crafts which will take place outside the time frame of the application for the European Heritage Awards.

The annual conferences serve as important platforms for disseminating the results of training courses while promoting the exchange of knowledge and experiences, advancing the field of heritage conservation and education.





RESULTS AND OUTREACH: EXHIBITIONS

EUROPEAN HERITAGE VOLUNTEERS' EXHIBITION: COMMUNICATING TRAINING COURSES, ACHIEVEMENTS AND IMPACT ACROSS EUROPE

The European Heritage Volunteers' exhibition serves as a visual tool to showcase the achievements of the European Heritage Volunteers Programme, and its concept of Training Courses dedicated to traditional crafts in practice. Through an engaging display of panels, the exhibition highlights a selection of Training Courses, offering visitors a comprehensive understanding of the programme's scope, methodology, and results. It also provides an opportunity to learn about the extensive network of partners, including heritage-related organisations and institutions from across Europe.

Since 2022, the exhibition has toured various locations, enhancing its outreach and impact. It has been featured at a variety of venues such as the **Orangerie of Belvedere Palace in Weimar** during the European Heritage Days 2022 and 2023, the "denkmal", Europe's Leading Trade Fair for Conservation, Renovation and Old Building Renovation in **Leipzig** in 2022 and 2024, the **Information and Training Centre for Heritage Conservation in Mauerbach in Austria** in 2022, the **National Open-Air Museum of Lithuania** in 2023 and **Lielstraupe Castle in Latvia** in 2024. It has also been displayed at conferences as **HERITAGE 2022 in Valenica** in 2022, the **Bauhaus University in Weimar** in 2023, and the **Brandenburg University of Technology in Cottbus** in 2024, to name a few.

By presenting the outcomes of Training Courses and other heritage-related projects to a wider audience throughout Europe, the exhibition raises awareness of the importance of heritage conservation and non-formal heritage education, creating a sense of belonging to a wider European cultural context. It fosters connections between heritage professionals, local communities, and the public, amplifying the impact of the training courses and inspiring greater engagement with European cultural heritage.

EXHIBITION OVERVIEW: AMPLIFYING THE IMPACT OF SAFEGUARDING VERNACULAR ARCHITECTURE AT GREAT PRESPA LAKE IN ALBANIA

In June 2023, a permanent exhibition on the cultural and vernacular heritage of the Great Prespa Lake region was inaugurated at the info-point of Prespa National Park in Albania. Jointly curated by European Heritage Volunteers and various partners from Albania, the exhibition is based on the documentation of the vernacular architecture in Zaroshke Village, carried out by European Heritage Volunteers in collaboration with the Polytechnic University of Valencia in 2021. This research laid the groundwork for future conservation activities, including the **2024 Training Course "Safeguarding Vernacular Architecture Through Traditional Carpentry"**. The exhibition also features the **2022 Training Course "Rescue and Conservation of Highly Endangered Frescoes"**, which focused on preserving 14th-century frescoes.

The exhibition showcases various typologies of vernacular architecture as well as endangered traditional crafts and techniques typical of the region. As a permanent resource, the exhibition underscores the ongoing impact of European Heritage Volunteers' activities in the area. It raises awareness, promotes the safeguarding and revitalisation of endangered techniques, and inspires further conservation efforts among local communities, policymakers, and visitors.





RESULTS AND OUTREACH: SOCIAL MEDIA

EXPANDING OUTREACH THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA

European Heritage Volunteers uses Social media platforms to amplify the impact of its Training Courses and other heritage-related projects. By sharing updates, participants' stories, and outcomes, the organisation connects with a global audience, raising awareness about cultural heritage, heritage conservation, and heritage-related education. Social media also serves as a key tool for the organisation measuring outreach, using engagement metrics such as likes, shares, and comments to assess public interest and the resonance of its initiatives. Additionally, these platforms provide real-time feedback, helping to refine and enhance programmes. Through its digital presence, European Heritage Volunteers ensures that its work reaches wider audiences, inspiring participation in heritage conservation efforts.

Stay connected with European Heritage Volunteers:

- **LinkedIn:** European Heritage Volunteers
- **Facebook:** @heritagevolunteers
- **Instagram:** @heritagevolunteers

These platforms enable broader engagement and communication, ensuring the visibility and success of the Training Courses and projects.



European Heritage Volunteers´ Instagram

Has as of November 2024, **5,181 Followers**

With a majority of visits from users in the ages **18 – 24 (14.5%) and 25 – 34 (61.9%)**

Of which **72.7% are identified as female and 27.2% as male**

With around **157,774 views** in the last **90 days prior** to this report.



European Heritage Volunteers´ Facebook

Has as of November 2024, **6,017 Followers** predominantly from **Europe (75%)**

With a majority of visits from users in the ages **25 – 34 (40.2%) and 35 – 44 (20.5%)**

Of which **65.3% are identified as female and 34.7% as male**

With ~**15,000 visits and reach of** ~**115,000 viewers** in the year 2024 prior to this report.



European Heritage Volunteers´ LinkedIn

Has as of November 2024, **2,858 Followers**

With a majority of visits from users located in **Europe 71%**

They register prominently in the fields of **35% Heritage Conservation 25% Architecture**

With around **194 views** in the last **30 days prior** to this report.

RESULTS AND OUTREACH: TESTIMONIALS FROM PARTICIPANTS

"Participating in a Training Course organised by European Heritage Volunteers was a really delightful experience. The dry-stone works at Weimar's Belvedere Park were not just about the technique and history; they became a truly unique experience of interacting with people from various backgrounds, cultures, and interests, all coming together to build something special. Engaging with these like-minded people in such an incredible place highlighted the profound value in safeguarding cultural heritage even more. Initially, I thought working with dry-stone would be tougher, but it turned out to be more like a combination of learning the traditional technique and thinking about the material. We achieved all this thanks to the really admirable work of our technical instructor. I'm really happy and proud that I decided to take part during my summer in 2023 in the European Heritage Volunteers Programme!"

Luis Pavan, Architect and PhD Candidate from Brazil
Participant in the Training Course in Weimar / Germany

"Following a Training Course organised by European Heritage Volunteers last year in Montenegro dealing with the conservation of a stone-slab-roofed structure, this year I have participated in different Training Courses. In Germany, in Weimar, the course focused on the conservation of historic dry-stone walls and the reconstruction of a historic path system at Belvedere Palace, based on a series of historical plans. In Portel, in Portugal, at the Chapel of São Brás, I was also able to familiarise myself with techniques of conservation and restoration of frescoes, including meticulously removing layers of lime wash and consolidating fragile areas. I'm always seeking to further understand and appreciate our heritage, and for me, the practical hands-on aspect of the European Heritage Volunteers Programme is a way of translating architectural theory into practice. Moreover, these experiences have been an opportunity to learn from like-minded professionals, gaining insights into different cultures while appreciating and enhancing the social, historical, and architectural values of these sites."

Mireille Tabone, Architect with Masters in Conservation from Malta
Participant in the Training Courses in Gornji Stoliv / Montenegro, Weimar / Germany and Portel / Portugal

"To have participated within the European Heritage Volunteers Programme this summer has helped me to grow both personally and professionally. Not only allowed me to gain practical experience on heritage sites but also made me improve skills as planification, communication and proactivity. I was able to see how different heritage management models are implement and which strategies works better for every situation. I appreciate working with different people and learn from their backgrounds. At the end, culture is a global experience to be socially shared and enjoyed.

From the Training Courses organised by European Heritage Volunteers, I especially liked the variety of topics, bringing the chance to work with several materials and techniques directly on site. The international dimension of the groups made the experience rich and valuable, not only as a networking opportunity but also as a human event. After this season, I believe even more in cooperative working models around heritage. This kind of platform really makes an impact, particularly in young professionals so I can't wait to see what's in for next summer!"

Amanda Hosinsky, Conservator Restorer with Masters in 21st Century Cultural Heritage from Spain
Participant in the Training Courses in Lauenstein Castle / Germany and Rumsiskes / Lithuania

"Re-erecting a hundred-year-old wooden construction was a great opportunity to combine theoretical knowledge from my educational background and learning traditional carpentry techniques. The Training Course really flourished by excellent guidance of the Technical Instructor, the dynamic of the group and the collective interest about our work there. Engaging in a 13th century castle in rural Latvia with a very complex history and getting to know numerous people who have a deep link with the site and its history provided me with so much more knowledge and understanding about the place. When documenting Lielstrape Castle I understood the value of our work even more by exchanging with the community and hearing about their connection to the place."

Paula Brandenburg, Heritage Conservator from Germany
Participant in the Training Courses in Niesky / Germany and Lielstraupe Castle / Latvia

RESULTS AND OUTREACH: TESTIMONIALS FROM PARTICIPANTS

“Coming here to gain practical knowledge and experience in the conservation and restoration of historic plaster and walls, I had the opportunity to learn about the Jewish history of Halberstadt, with a particular focus on the synagogue, which unfortunately has not survived to this day, but is evidenced by its preserved front wall. Here, a variety of works were to be learnt to do and carried out, ranging from preparing mortar and manufacturing supplementary compounds to colour matching with pigments and mixing glazes for retouching various stone surfaces. The time spent at the site was valuable, meaningful and full of new knowledge, in terms of conservation and restoration techniques and themed of memory."

Tautvydas Bokmota, Researcher with studies in Geography
and Masters in Spatial Planning and Heritage, from Lituhania
Participant in the Training Course in Halberstadt / Germany

“In 2023, I was immersed in the world of gravestones’ conservation and restoration in a picturesque cemetery in Germany. Guided by an experienced instructor from the organisation's network, I was able to learn all the necessary steps to halt deterioration processes in stone supports, conserve and stabilise the monuments and the attempt to recover the beauty of these important historical features. What struck me most about this experience was the opportunity to deal directly with historical monuments, always in the presence of conservator-restorers, and to feel that my work made a difference to the heritage of another country, at local and national levels. Recovering and honouring the history of a particular site through hands-on experience made me understand not only what happens behind conservation and restoration processes and the products and materials used, but also the impact that we, young heritage professionals, can make through voluntary engagement."

Angelica Vedana, historian and a PhD Candidate in Anthropology and Cultural Heritage from Brazil
Participant in the Training Course in Hameln / Germany

"This last summer, I finally had the chance to participate in a Training Course in Slovakia. I can assure you that my expectations were completely matched. I went to the course looking for a hands-on experience in heritage, in other words, to get my hands dirty. Like me, I believe almost every participant had similar expectations. We definitely get our hands dirty! It was a really challenging and joyful time. Together with all the other participants in my course, we managed to help on the conservation of a castle in the middle of a Slovak forest. The works were intense and sometimes tiring but we really enjoyed them. If I had to highlight something from the Training Courses organised by European Heritage Volunteers would be the bond that is created between all the participants thanks to the teamwork, a bond that will last forever!"

Miguel Senra Hermana, Culture and Citizenship Manager
and Member of the European Heritage Label Bureau, from Spain
Participant in the Training Course in Tematín Castle / Slovakia

"Last summer I participated for the first time at a Training Coure organised by European Heritage Volunteers – in Straupe, Latvia. We immersed ourselves for two weeks long into the fascinating history of Lielstraupe Castle. In the first part of the Training Course, we got to know the castle and its environment from several perspectives. We were given a guided tour, met the architect who conducted historical research on the castle and got to know some descendants of the von Rosen family who once inhabited the castle. During the weekend, we discovered the area around Lielstraupe via excursions to Cēsis Castle, Valmieras Muzejs and Ungurmuiza Manor House.

In the second part of the programme, we got to work on the documentation and inventory of the castle. Guided by two conservation architects, we took measurements, digitalised old plans and created individual records for each room. Each record describes the age, material and colour of all the wall surfaces, ceiling and floor. Additionally all windows, doors and stoves were inventoried too. The programme ended festively at the annual Lielstraupe Castle Festival where we presented our findings. This experience not only took me to a unique place where I got to meet interesting people, but also allowed me to experience first-hand the community, and the emotional connection of the locals to their heritage."

Heleen van Acker, Architect with Master in Heritage Studies from Belgium
Participant in the Training Courses in Lielstraupe / Latvia

RESULTS AND OUTREACH: TESTIMONIALS FROM OFFICIAL PARTNERS

"The Klassik Stiftung Weimar, Department of Parks and Gardens, has maintained a fruitful long-term cooperation with European Heritage Volunteers. Over the past years, several editions of Training Courses have enabled the restoration and reconstruction of historic drystone walls in the park of Belvedere Castle. This work, made possible through the application of traditional skills, is conducted under the supervision of a mason highly specialised in heritage conservation. The drystone walls, having suffered years of neglect and recent damage due to the impacts of climate change, are being preserved and stabilised through the efforts of the participants. Such vital conservation work would not be feasible under the conventional market conditions of tendering and awarding contracts. The Klassik Stiftung Weimar deeply values this collaboration. It not only safeguards the historical integrity of this UNESCO World Heritage site but also ensures the transmission of traditional craft techniques, alongside the historical and cultural context, to an international cohort of participants."

Andreas Pahl, Parks and Gardens Officer
Klassik Stiftung Weimar / Germany

"The experience of the Training Course organised by European Heritage Volunteers has been fantastic for the entire team that manages the dissemination of Palauet Nolla and the Nolla mosaic legacy. Having the opportunities of working with young restorers, archaeologists and architects of more than ten different nationalities amplifies the Nolla community. In addition, it has also given us a lot of new ideas for the Nolla Ceramics Research and Dissemination Centre and the Meliana City Council to collaborate with international institutions in the near future."

Angela López, Project Coordinator
Nolla Ceramics Research and Dissemination Centre / Spain

"The Training Course dedicated to the translocation of the building named "Little Christoph" was certainly one of the most important and exciting endeavours in the ten-year history of our museum. Without European Heritage Volunteers, we would not have managed it so easily, quickly and with such good quality on our own. The small building is probably one of the most influential role models for the serial garden house architecture of our time and it represents the combination of cultural heritage preservation and modern timber construction vision in such a wonderfully compact and direct way. In the meantime, our project has also found imitators: Several examples of the almost 100-year-old, one-time in our city produced prefabricated buildings have been identified and are now being restored by their owners."

Dr. Jan Bergmann-Ahlswede, Museum Director
Museum Wachsmannhaus Niesky / Germany

"The Training Course in Mandritsa provided Meshtra with several significant benefits. It enabled the continuation of our research efforts in the region while fostering strong connections with the local community. The course also facilitated the evaluation of heritage through the valuable insights of participants from diverse professional backgrounds worldwide, enriching our understanding and approach. Additionally, it strengthened our ties with the European Heritage Volunteers Network, opening up opportunities for future collaborations and reinforcing our commitment to heritage conservation on a broader, transnational scale."

Kubrat Milev, Board Representative
Meshtra – Traditional Knowledge and Crafts / Bulgaria

"For our local community, the cooperation with the European Heritage Volunteers was truly a celebration. It is so important for us to feel and see that there are other enthusiastic people who understand and support our dreams and aspirations for the restoration and revitalisation of the medieval Lielstraupe Castle. However, just as important as the actual work done was the opportunity to talk with these young people and their supervisors. We, the local community, are not a homogeneous group; our perspectives and knowledge are diverse. Therefore, the young people helped us find greater unity, even among conflicting viewpoints. This is very important to us so that we can continue to unite in the future on our path to filling Lielstraupe Castle with new life."

Rudite Vasile, President
Lielstraupe Castle Association / Latvia

RESULTS AND OUTREACH: TESTIMONIALS FROM OFFICIAL PARTNERS

"The Training Courses brought Prijatelji Baštine – Amici Hereditatis Ivanić-Grad experience in an international context, as well as support and assistance in the development of ideas and implementation of our projects. With the help of Eurpean Hertage Volunteers, for the first time in Ivanić-Grad, the most important site in the city, the wooden fortress, has been systematically excavated, researched, and documented. The training courses marked a turning point in historical and archaeological research in our city, stimulated the interest and support of the local community, and encouraged new directions in future research. This enabled us as young heritage enthusiasts to realise our ideas in an international atmosphere, opened up new perspectives for us through numerous global acquaintances, and gave us confidence in further professional and personal development."

Laura Šejić, President
Prijatelji Baštine – Amici Hereditatis Ivanić-Grad / Croatia

"Bringing hidden history to light, securing newly discovered treasures for the future, and providing fresh inspiration for the museum team – these are the results of the work carried out by the young professionals at Saxony's Lauenstein Castle. For the second consecutive year, restoration students have uncovered historic wall paintings, revealing some surprising finds. With great patience, precision, and expertise, these young individuals have been working on the uncovering and preservation of historic wall paintings in Lauenstein Castle. These findings are of great importance for the further development of the site as part of the UNESCO World Heritage Montanregion Erzgebirge/Krušnohoří. The direct and straightforward communication, along with the reliable planning by the organisers from European Heritage Volunteers, not only ensures the easy and successful execution of the courses in Lauenstein but also creates unforgettable shared experiences for all involved."

Gabriele Gelbrich, Director
Museum of the Eastern Ore Mountains Lauenstein Castle / Germany

"It was a special honor and pleasure for us as a national institution to welcome young heritage professionals from many European countries. They brought with them various experiences from other Training Courses, and from here they left with new knowledge about the cultural heritage of our country. I hope they will share these experiences across their institutions, universities and colleagues. These very diverse projects are important for the future of European cultural heritage because culture knows no borders."

Branko Gjorgjiev, Director
National Institute for Protection of Culture Monuments and Museum – Strumica / North Macedonia

"On behalf of myself, the Kamelija Association, and the entire Stoliv community, I extend our deepest gratitude for European Heritage Volunteers' unwavering commitment to preserving the cultural heritage of Gornji Stoliv. It is a tremendous honour for our Stoliv community to host heritage students from around the world and we are thrilled that you chose our small village among the many remarkable sites throughout Europe. Many of us were born and raised in Gornji Stoliv, and we fondly remember its days of prosperity. Your presence here has rekindled our hope that our village can be revitalised in a way that honours our traditions. We thoroughly enjoyed sharing our personal stories, history, and traditions with you, and learning about your countries enriched this experience for us immensely.Thank you for your tireless efforts to slow the decay of our village and raise awareness about the threats posed by inappropriate new interventions in Gornji Stoliv. We will forever cherish your achievements and share them with future generations."

Mato Boža Vujović
Kamelija Stoliv Association, Montenegro

"Since 2018, the cooperation between European Heritage Volunteers and the Moses Mendelssohn Academy in Halberstadt has been highly successful. The Moses Mendelssohn Academy preserves the architectural heritage of the city's Jewish legacy and uses Halberstadt as a case study to convey European-Jewish history. This collaboration means that European Heritage Volunteers' support the documentation and preservation of the Jewish heritage. In return, the Academy provides the participants who come from diverse cultural backgrounds, with knowledge about Jewish history and culture, aiming, among other goals, to counteract antisemitism and xenophobia."

Jutta Dick, Chairperson
Moses Mendelssohn Academy Foundation Halberstadt / Germany

This Evaluation Report was finalised in November 2024

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APPENDIX

SAMPLE OF AN EVALUATION FORM

Training Course 202X
[name of the Training Course]
[location of the Training Course]
Evaluation form

Name and surname (optional):

1. What was your initial motivation to apply for a European Heritage Training Course (strong, small, not at all)

- to get professional education/professional exchange in the field of heritage _____
- to support with your physical work the restoration in the field of heritage _____
- to have international exchange in a group _____
- other:

2. Please describe your general impression about the Training Course in some sentences.

3. How did you like the following topics? Please, write an X according to your opinion.
Feel free to add some more detailed comments or explanations.

	VERY GOOD	GOOD	OKEY	NOT GOOD	BAD	N/A
TRAINING COURSE						
a) The Training Course						
b) The Heritage Site						

PRACTICAL PART						
a) In general						
b) Concerning the works						
c) Concerning schedule (starting time, breaks, etc)						
d) Concerning duration of the training course						
e) Concerning the working area at X						

Which proposals do you have for a possible next year project at the same heritage site concerning the working part?

	VERY GOOD	GOOD	OKEY	NOT GOOD	BAD	N/A
EDUCATIONAL/ SOCIAL PART						
In general						
Introduction to the working areas						
[EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES]						
[EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES]						
[EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES]						
[EXCURSION DAY ACTIVITIES]						
Internal Presentations by the participants						
Public presentations by the participants with guests of the local community						
Final event and overhanding of certificates						

Do you have proposals to improve the educational program? Which ones?

Were the English translations sufficiently clear during the educational programme?

	VERY GOOD	GOOD	OKEY	NOT GOOD	BAD	N/A
PRESS ACTIVITIES						
a) Photo and video documentation during the project by the local press						
b) Social media undertaken by European Heritage Volunteers						

	VERY GOOD	GOOD	OKEY	NOT GOOD	BAD	N/A
GROUP						
a) In general						
b) The group size						
c) The mixture of countries of origin						
d) The age mixture						
e) The gender mixture						

	VERY GOOD	GOOD	OKEY	NOT GOOD	BAD	N/A
ACCOMODATION						
a) In general						
b) Distance from the working site						
c) Sleeping rooms						
d) Bathrooms and showering facilities						
e) The dining area						
f) The leisure outdoors area						

Do you have proposal to improve the accommodation and working spaces? Which ones?

FOOD						
a) In general						
b) Breakfast						
c) Lunch						
d) Dinner						
e) Availability of food options for participants with dietary restrictions						

Do you have any remarks concerning the food?

	VERY GOOD	GOOD	OKEY	NOT GOOD	BAD	N/A
ORGANISATION AND THE WORK MADE BY THE TEAM AND THE LOCAL PARTNER						
a) In general						
b) The structure, the sharing of responsibilities and the collaboration in the team as well as between the team and the local partner						
c) The group coordination by XX						
d) The technical instruction by XX						
e) Adequacy of support and opportunities for dialogue provided in addressing sensitive or challenging topics related to the training course, including external situations or conflicts that may have affected participants' experiences.						

f) The support and organisation by the partners and the staff						
g) Preparation and safety rules at the working site						

Do you have additional remarks concerning the work of the team and the local partners?

4. What was your best impression during the training course?

5. What was your worst impression during training course?

6. Would you recommend the project to your friends?

7. Which proposals would you have for next year training course?

Thank you for your cooperation!