European Heritage Awards / Europa Nostra Awards (2025)
1123-Education, Training and Skills 3. Education, Training & Skills

Pro Monumenta II.

MNLxeAJE

Entry details

General information

Main country of application	Slovakia

In case there are other official partners involved in the project, please list the country(ies) they come from

> Norway, Riksantikvaren - Directorate for cultural heritage

Brief description of the project

> Pro Monumenta II. strengthens and continues to evolve the previously implemented system of preventive inspections of immovable cultural monuments (Pro Monumenta - prevention by maintenance, 2014-2017), within the framework of the Monuments Board of the Slovak Republic, financed by EEA Grants.
> Systematic preventive maintenance is an effective and cost-efficient method of preserving monuments for future generations. In comparison to one-off large-scale restorations, preventive maintenance is usually less expensive, less invasive and ensures the authenticity of the monument. This project improves and popularizes the idea of preventive maintenance of monuments in Slovakia.

Start date of the project	2019-04-25
Completion date of the project/initiative	2023-08-31
Website(s) of the project/nominee	www.promonumenta.sk
Facebook page of the project, if any	https://www.facebook.com/promonumenta.sk
Instagram page of the project, if any	https://www.instagram.com/pro_monumenta/
Any other relevant social media	www.youtube.com/@promonumenta9551
Does the site or heritage in question have national/regional/local cultural	No

heritage designation or protection status in its country?	
Is the site or heritage in question included on the UNESCO World Heritage List, either as a single World Heritage Site or as part of one larger site?	No
If relevant, is the site/heritage accessible to the public?	Yes

Contact details

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Entrant's position	Head of department of preventative maintenance of monuments
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Organisation of the owner	The Monuments Board of the Slovak Republic
Name of the project leader	Branislav Rezník
Project leader's position	Project manager/Head of department of preventative maintenance of monuments
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Other relevant participants

- Ing. arch. Pavol Ižvolt, PhD., The Monuments Board of the Slovak Republic (MBSR), expert coordinator, later CEO MBSR, www.pamiatky.sk
- Andreas Skauen Pedersten, Riksantikvaren - Directorate for Cultural Heritage, Norway, representative of the Norwegian project partner, www.ra.no

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Concise summary

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- Project Pro Monumenta II. successfully supplemented and expanded the system of preventive maintenance of monuments in Slovak Republic. The 3 carefully trained three-man inspection teams that had already been created and evenly distributed across the country, were each assigned an additional monument inspector. The teams have been operating within the department of preventive maintenance of monuments, under The Monuments Board of the Slovak Republic, since 2014.
- Additionally, Pro Monumenta II. increased their work efficiency by deploying drones, helping with the visual inspection of hard-to-reach monuments - three monument inspectors received full authorization for drone flights over monuments regardless of their location. In addition to the existing, fully-equipped mobile workshop vehicles used by each of the inspection teams, smaller less-equiped vehicles were acquired, which enabled one team to intervene in two places at the same time. This makes it possible to carry out at least 100 inspections of immovable monuments a year, the results of which are not only immediate interventions to remove minor faults found within the structures of the monuments (roofs, gutters etc.), but also a detailed technical report on the state of the monument and a maintenance plan.
- The project also set out to solve the lack of experienced craftsmen who are familiar with traditional building trades. Therefore, as part of the project, selected buildings owned by MBSR were adapted to not only be the regional headquarters of the department of preventive maintenance of monuments, but also small training centers focused on specific traditional procedures for repairing monuments. These buildings are located in Trnava (western Slovakia), Banská Štiavnica (UNESCO monument - central Slovakia) and Levoča (UNESCO monument - eastern Slovakia). Each of the training centers has its traditional construction trade focus as follows:
- Trnava - (lime) plaster, simple facade stucco, blacksmithing
- Banská Štiavnica - truss carpentry, wooden shingles, tinsmithing
- Levoča - restoration of historic windows and doors, masonry, tinsmithing
  All adapted regional offices therefore have an administrative part, where inspectors process information about the construction and technical condition of the monument, as well as an area intended for theoretical lectures for 2 people, in the field of traditional construction trades. Other parts of the buildings serve as specific craft workshops, tool and material warehouses, but also garages for mobile workshop vehicles. Fully equipped craft workshops are used not only for practical sessions for training participants, but also as a background for the everyday craft work of monument inspectors.

Objectives and work undertaken

Aims and objectives of the project/initiative

- The condition of immovable monuments listed in the central list of monuments in Slovakia does not change even in the medium term - the number of monuments in unsatisfactory or desolate condition is only decreasing slowly. Neither changes in the legislation and organization of monument protection, nor the better setting and strengthening of the state subsidy system implemented in the last 25 years in Slovakia, are enough. The experience of other European countries proves that these changes are insufficient without an effective system of

prevention and education. For more than 10 years, MBSR has been trying to create an effective system of preventive maintenance of monuments following the example of the Dutch Monumentewacht.
- The main goal of the Pro Monumenta II. project is to improve the structural and technical condition of immovable cultural monuments in Slovakia by upgrading the Pro Monumenta - Prevention through Maintenance project, which itself introduced the system of preventive maintenance of monuments.

Any historical and technical research undertaken for the project/initiative

As part of the introduction of the system of preventive maintenance of monuments in Slovakia in the years 2014 - 2017 (Pro Monumenta - prevention by maintenance), detailed methods of inspection of the construction and technical condition of the property according to its structural parts were devised. The most important minds in the field of monument protection from Slovakia and the Czech Republic participated in the creation of the methodologies. Within the project Pro Monumenta II., some of these methodologies were refined further.

Activities carried out and stages of implementation of the project/initiative

During the years 2019 - 2023, these activities were carried out:

1. Monitoring of immovable monuments with afforded inspection teams (by one additional trained inspector), and complemented by one smaller mobile workshop vehicle and drone. This led to an increase in efficiency in the inspection of monuments and reduced the risk of injury when detecting faults in the hard-to-reach parts of the monument.
2. Reconstruction of three training centers and ensuing trainings for craftsmen. 3 unused properties in the management of the Monuments Board were adapted for the needs of the regional centers of the inspection teams of the department of preventive maintenance of monuments - which are distributed across the country in traditional city centers with a large number of immovable monuments.
3. Sharing of the inspection system know-how to the Norwegian partner. Norway followed the example of Lithuania, where the relevant authorities introduced a similar system of preventive maintenance of monuments based on the Pro Monumenta model (Fixus Mobilis). The Norwegian partner of the project - Riksantikvaren - based on the illustrative examples of the work of Pro Monumenta inspectors on monuments in Norway (Oslo, Drobak), implemented some parts in its system of preventive maintenance of medieval churches.
4. Publicising the project and the idea of preventive maintenance using new techniques: Creating video tutorials youtube for the maintenance of monuments and organizing events in the historic cities. In 2021 and 2022, 4 events known as "Gutter Cleaning Day"s were organized in 4 different historic cities in Slovakia (Skalica, Banská Štiavnica, Kežmarok, Levoča), which promoted the idea of the regular maintenance of monuments. TV spots
5. Organizing 9 workshops in the fields of monuments maintenance, lime plaster, truss carpentry, and tinsmithing in training centers.

Challenges or problems encountered and solutions found to overcome them

Of course, the worldwide Covid-19 pandemic also affected our project efforts. We found a solution in the organization of work: we carried out the inspections of monuments, gutter cleaning days, and workshops during periods when social contact was less restricted, and during lockdowns the inspectors concentrated on writing technical reports or independent maintenance work on the regional centers.

Results and impact

Summary of the main results achieved and knowledge that has been gained. List the ways that the project/initiative contributes to the preservation and/or enhancement of the historical, cultural, environmental, educational and/or social values of the heritage in question. Mention the project's impact on conservation policy and practice, if any.

- The benefits of preventive maintenance of monuments are widely known:

1. Lower costs:
   · it is cheaper than extensive restoration,
   · early resolution of minor problems usually prevents extensive and costly damage, prolongs the lifetime of the monument and reduces the need for extensive repairs in the future.
2. Preserving authenticity:
   · it is the best way to preserve the existing historical substance of the monument.
3. Less impact on memory:
   · it is usually less invasive than extensive restoration.
4. Increases the attractiveness of the place:
   · Monuments in good condition are more attractive for tourists and visitors - it supports tourism.
5. Better information:
   · leads to better information about the state of the monument, which enables timely identification and resolution of problems.
   The system of preventive maintenance within the framework of The Monuments Board of Slovak Republic has become widely known in the field of cultural heritage protection in Slovakia for more than 10 years. Between 2017 and 2022, the Ministry of Culture, as part of the subsidy program "Renew our house" (supporting the reconstruction of monuments), introduced the obligation for applicants in subprogram 1.5 of larger renovations (within the boundary of 250,000 - 1,000,000 Euros) to attach an abbreviated version of the Technical Report on the Monument by the Department of Preventive Maintenance of MBSR. These documents described the current state of the monument at the time of the grant application. The supported projects had contractually agreed to be monitored by the monument inspectors at the end of each restoration stage. The aim was to evaluate the correctness and quality of the completed works, before sending the funds for the next stage. Controlling the set-up in this way contributed to an increase in the quality of the restoration of the monument.

Aspects of the project that can be considered innovative within its area or field.

Introducing the use of drones during the inspection process of monuments, thus increasing time efficiency and reducing the risk of injury when detecting faults in hard-to-reach parts of the monuments.
Most of the four-member inspection teams are staffed with experts who not only have an academic education, many years of experience with architecture and historical buildings, and the ability to expertly assess the construction-technical condition of the property, but also are skilled craftsmen in one or more traditional crafts. All inspectors are also licensed to perform work at heights with climbing equipment and three of them are official pilots - drone operators. The accumulation of professional knowledge, many years of experience, craft skills, all with an emphasis on monuments, and at the same time the ability to work at heights makes the majority of monument inspectors uniquely trained experts.

Measures to ensure the sustainability/future viability of the project (in terms of future plans and funding).

The sustainability of the Pro Monumenta II. project is contractually set for 5 years and is currently financed by the Monuments Board of the SR through the organization's state budget. From the beginning of the period of sustainability, the actual costs incurred (material and work) are charged to the owner and administrator of the monuments for completed work on the removal of minor defects. Inspections of monuments and the resulting technical reports on the state of the cultural monument are not yet charged. The introduction and maintenance of a system of preventive maintenance of monuments was a part of the long-term strategic plans of the Government of the SR. Since it is an already established and demonstrably effective tool for the protection of historical values, we anticipate the continuation of its financing through the budget of the Monuments Board of the SR.

Environmental sustainability of the project and contribution to climate action (in terms of results, techniques, materials employed, methodologies etc.), if relevant.

The idea of preserving monuments through regular maintenance is in itself environmentally sustainable, as this approach focuses on preserving the mostly already-built parts of the monument, and replacing only irreversibly

damaged parts. The consistent maintenance of an immovable monument in the best possible structural and technical condition is a strong contributor to environmental sustainability.

Dissemination of the project's results and knowledge gained and any outreach or educational activities.

Pro Monumenta II. addresses this area on several levels:
Education of owners and managers of monuments during each inspection and maintenance, with detailed recommendations in the Technical Report.
Raising awareness of regular maintenance by organizing events called "Gutter Cleaning Day"s in the centers of 4 historic towns (Skalica, Banská Štiavnica, Kežmarok, Levoča), during which gutters were cleaned at dozens of monuments and awareness was raised at a stand in the city center.
Education on and the practice of traditional crafts through the organisation of 9 workshops in the fields of lime plastering, trusses, tinsmithing, and the restoration of historic windows and doors, in the newly-built traditional crafts centres. The workshops continue on a regular basis.
Participation in several conferences related to the restoration of historic buildings with lectures on their maintenance.
Several video-instructions on monument maintenance published on promonumenta.sk - a source for advice in the field of monument maintenance.

Participation in the initiative (number of participants/audience/users per year and/or, in the case of websites and digital platforms, information regarding visitor numbers and online interaction).

The results of Pro Monument II. were:
3 newly-trained inspectors - expansion of three inspection teams by one inspector each time.
343 technical reports of individual monuments were processed and partial maintenance was carried out for owners and managers of monuments (210 were planned in the project).
More than 100 monuments with repaired roofs and gutters during 4 days of cleaning gutters in historical cities of Slovakia.
3 workshops/trainings where 33 craftsmen, owners and administrators of monuments were trained.
31 media outlets of various kinds (newspaper articles, TV, radio, web...)
4541 unique visitors to the website in 2022-23 when traffic began to be tracked

Involvement of youth, community, non-traditional audiences and/or people with disabilities.

Craft workshop/trainings brought together various communities interested in traditional crafts and were a great place to share cross-disciplinary experiences.
During "gutter cleaning days", due to its unusual demonstration of gutter maintenance using high-lift platform vehicles, a diverse swathe of people were attracted and learned more about the subject.

Contribution to intercultural dialogue and to the protection of cultural diversity.

Project Pro Monumenta II. cares about cultural diversity in its own way - not by focusing on any one type of historic building, but rather including a large variety of monuments such as castles, noble houses, churches, mansions, chapels, manor houses, railway stations, monasteries etc., which brings together various cultural backgrounds as represented by each type of unique architecture.

Transferability of the initiative to other contexts and its scalability potential.

The know-how of the whole upgraded inspection system was already transfered to different scales:
In Lithuania, the relevant authorities introduced a similar system of preventive maintenance of monuments based on the Pro Monumenta project – Fixus Mobilis (https://www.fixusmobilis.lt)
The Norwegian partner of the project - Riksantikvaren - based on the illustrative examples of the work of Pro Monumenta inspectors on monuments in Norway (Oslo, Drobak), implemented aspects in its system of preventive maintenance of medieval churches.
In Romania, the relevant authorities are now creating a similar system of preventive maintenance of monuments

based on the Pro Monumenta project.
These examples demonstrates that the Pro Monumenta maintenance system is highly transferable and can be adopted at different scales. In the Netherlands, where the system has existed since 1973, it has gradually developed into a nationwide network of regional workplaces that work independently and together employ several hundred inspectors.

Interim or Final Evaluation Report

DOCX	Monitoring report _ PMII.... (81 KiB download)

European and international dimension

European significance of the project/initiative/nominee.

The project is a good example of the spread of a good idea within the European community: the Dutch Monumentenwacht became the inspiration for the Slovak model, the implementation of which was financed by EEA Grants and strengthened by an important partnership with Riksantikvaren - Directorate for Cultural Heritage. As part of the project, some aspects of the system were also introduced in Norway https://www.riksantikvaren.no/kirkevakta-testet-ut-pa-oslo-domkirke/. In addition to the already realized transfer of know-how to Lithuania, The Monuments Board of SR is currently consulting with authorities in Poland, Romania (where there is a currently ongoing bilateral project "Preventively and actively together" funded by EEA Grants), and Latvia for the introduction of similar preventive maintenance systems for monuments.

Costs of the project/initiative

Costs of the project (in euro), financial and management arrangements, funding partners and/or the type of funding.

The project Pro Monumenta II. was financed in the amount of 1,500,000 € through EEA Grants and within this framework co-financed by the amount of 225 thousand € from the SR state budget. It was a pre-defined project implemented as part of SK-CULTURE Cultural Entrepreneurship, Cultural Heritage and Cultural Cooperation. The project was implemented by the preventive maintenance department of The Monuments Board of the Slovak Republic. The project manager was the head of the department Branislav Rezník. Project management costs were 8.7% of the total project costs. The project was financed through advances of up to 90%, and then the remaining 10% of the funds invested by the grant recipient were refunded.

Funding provided by the European Union or the EEA/Norway Grants (including programme, year and amount of the Grant), if any.

The project Pro Monumenta II. was financed in the amount of 1,500,000 € through EEA Grants and within this framework co-financed by the amount of 225 thousand. € from the SR state budget. It was a pre-defined project implemented as part of the program SK-CULTURE Cultural Entrepreneurship, Cultural Heritage and Cultural Cooperation. Program administrator: Ministry of Investments, Regional Development and Informatization of the Slovak Republic. Donor partner of the program: Directorate for Cultural Heritage / Riksantikvaren & The Norwegian Council for the Arts / Kulturrådet. Annual Programme Report for 2023:
https://www.eeagrants.sk/programy/kultura/dokumenty/?csrt=8441861589048603254
The project started on 25/04/2019 and lasted 45 months until 31/08/2023.

Additional information

How would winning the European Heritage Award / Europa Nostra Award benefit you, your project and/or your organisation?

> In the history of the Europa Nostra awards, only one organization from Slovakia has received the award. For the Monuments Board of the Slovak Republic, this would be confirmation of the validity of its more-than-a-decade-long effort to raise awareness of the need for preventive maintenance of monuments, and the preservation of traditional building skills as a simple but very effective method of preserving the monumental values of immovable monuments.

In case this submission is the winner of the Grand Prix, what will the monetary award be used for?

> If our efforts were awarded the Grand Prix, the funds would be used for the next wave of a social media awareness campaign targeting monument owners/managers, emphasising the need for (and benefits of) preventive maintenance. And perhaps a nice dinner for the preventive maintenance of monuments department...

In case this submission is the winner of the Grand Prix, who will be the recipient of the monetary award?

> The Monuments Board of the Slovak Republic.

How did you find out about the European Heritage Awards / Europa Nostra Awards?	Europa Nostra website
Is this the first time that this entry has been submitted to the European Heritage Awards / Europa Nostra Awards?	Yes
On a scale of 1-10, how satisfied are you with this online submission form?	✓ 9
By submitting your data, photographs and other material to the European Heritage Awards / Europa Nostra Awards you agree to the processing and sharing of your data in accordance with Europa Nostra's Privacy Policy. Please check the box to indicate you agree with the Privacy Policy.	✓

Log in to european-heritage.awardsplatform.com to see complete entry attachments.



B. Stiavnica_HQ... 1.7 MiB



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B. Stiavnica_HQ... 3.1 MiB



B. Stiavnica_HQ... 862 KiB



B. Stiavnica_HQ... 5.1 MiB



B. Stiavnica_HQ... 650 KiB



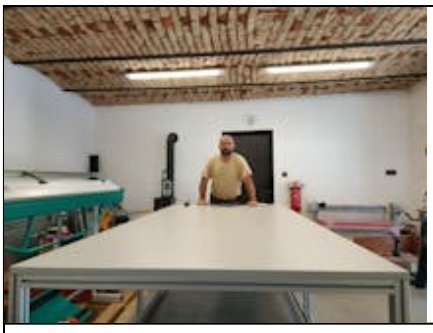
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Levoca_HQ Regi... 3.7 MiB



Trnava_HQ Regi... 2.2 MiB



Trnava_HQ Regi... 4.0 MiB



Trnava_HQ Regi... 3.0 MiB



Trnava_HQ Regi... 927 KiB



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Inspectio_Šiveti... 4.4 MiB



Inspection with ... 1.1 MiB



Inspection_Mat... 652 KiB



Inspection_Mor... 3.8 MiB



Inspection_Ratk... 5.2 MiB



Inspection_Brat... 1.2 MiB



Inspection_Sen... 2.4 MiB



Inspection_Zvol... 1.8 MiB



Inspection_Tren... 2.5 MiB



Training for wor... 4.1 MiB



Gutter cleaning... 362 KiB



Gutter cleaning... 2.2 MiB



Gutter cleaning... 2.8 MiB



Gutter cleaning... 2.0 MiB



Gutter cleaning... 2.9 MiB



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