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SYSTEM OF PROTECTION OF CULTURE AND TRADITIONS

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The system of protection of cultural heritage in the Czech Republic

Czech UNESCO Heritage is a voluntary association of the towns and communities in the Czech Republic on whose territory there is a site inscribed in the World Cultural a Natural Heritage List or the World Heritage List for short. The Deed of Foundation of the Czech UNESCO Heritage Association was signed on 29 June 2001.

The Association aims to be a lobby group standing up for the interests of the "UNESCO towns and communities" and in this respect joint publicity is important, as education and training is. The inscription of the site on the World Heritage List is highly prestigious. It guarantees a certain level of quality for tourists and provides them with a motivation to visit.

UNESCO sites also form a great textbook for the history of cultures, provide evidence of a beautiful diversity and there are flagships for the conservation of cultural heritage in many countries.

Prague

Historical downtown



Each part of the capital city of the Czech Republic – the Lesser Town, the Castle District, the Old and New Towns, was developed from the 10th century onwards.

Prague Castle, the Cathedral of St. Vitus and Charles Bridge, many churches and palaces were also constructed in the next centuries and together they form a magnificent architectural, artistic and spiritual ensemble.

Holašovice

Village reservation



Holašovice is an exceptionally well-preserved example of a traditional Central European village.

A number of high-quality village buildings from the 18th and 19th century in a style known as "South Bohemian Folk Baroque" have been preserved on a ground plan that dates from the middle ages.

Český

Krumlov

Historical downtown



The castle complex with its unique Baroque theatre, the meander in the River Vltava, the city arms with its five-leaved rose, medieval streets and stone townhouses.

This is Český Krumlov – a cosmopolitan city with a unique atmosphere.

Kutná

Hora

Historical downtown, Church of St. Barbora, Cathedral of Our Lady at Sedlec



Ever since the end of the 13th century the history of Kutná Hora has been inseparably linked to the mining of silver ore.

The historical centre is an architectural jewel of European importance. The late gothic Church of St. Barbora and the Cathedral of Our Lady in Sedlec, rebuilt in the Baroque Gothic style, create a notional entrance gateway to the royal mining city.

Historical downtown

Telč



The city was built on the original foundations following a devastating fire at the end of the 14th century. A number of the Renaissance and Baroque townhouses remain to this day strengthened by a protective system of ponds. The Gothic castle was rebuilt in the Renaissance style at the end of the 16th century.

Žďár

nad

Sázavou

Pilgrimage Church of St. John of Nepomuk at Zelená Hora



The pilgrimage church, dedicated to St. John of Nepomuk, was built in the early 1820s. It is the finest work of the architect Jan Blažej Santini and the most original example of the so-called Baroque Gothic style.

It was built on a five-pointed star plan and it is surrounded by a cemetery and cloisters.

Třebíč

The Jewish Quarter and the Basilica of St. Procopius



The ensemble of the Jewish Quarter and the Basilica is a unique example of the close co-existence of Christian and Jewish culture from the Middle Ages until the 20th century.

The Basilica of St. Procopius was originally built as part of the Benedictine monastery in the early 13th century. It was influenced by Western European ideas in its construction.

Litomyšl

Gardens and castle



The Renaissance castle from the second half of the 16th century is an excellent example of an arcade castle based on an Italianate style.

Despite reconstruction of the interior at the end of the 18th century, outwardly it has retained and almost unadulterated Renaissance appearance, including the unique sgraffito facades and gables. A number of commercial buildings and a garden have also been preserved.

Brno

Tugendhat Villa



The Tugendhat Villa, built in 1929 – 1930 in Brno, is one of the most important examples of the functionalist style in the European period of the architect Ludwig Mies van der Rohe.

Using a steel frame without load-bearing walls allowed the architect to create the new and informal concept of an open and variable space that is linked with its natural surroundings.

Lednice,
Lednice-Valtice Cultural Landscape

Valtice



Between the 17th and 20th centuries the ruling Dukes of Liechtenstein transformed their domains into one huge park, where the Baroque and Neo-Gothic architecture of their chateaux are married with the smaller buildings and a landscape that was fashioned according to the English principles of landscape architecture.

Olomouc
Holy Trinity Column



This memorial column, erected in the early years of the 18th century, is the most outstanding example of a type of monument specific to central Europe.

In the characteristic regional style known as Olomouc Baroque, it rises to a height of 35m, it is decorated with many fine religious sculptures, the work of the distinguished Moravian artist Ondřej Zahner.

Kroměříž

Gardens and castle



The castle was built on earlier foundations in the 17th century and represents a uniquely-preserved Central European Baroque princely residence.

Its neighbouring gardens include the Podzamecká garden under the castle in a natural English-style landscape and the early Baroque Flower Gardens.

The system of protection of cultural heritage in Poland

What is cultural heritage?

Cultural heritage is an important factor in the life and activity of every human being. The term refers to the material and spiritual achievements of the previous generations, as well as the achievements of our times. It represents value - material or non-material – inherited from the ancestors and defining our culture. It includes all the environmental effects resulting from the interaction between people and the environment throughout history.

Culture is a factor that is closely related to social development. It teaches us to think creatively, to be open-minded and abolish stereotypes. These are the features which guarantee the growth of every society. By participating in culture and thanks to cultural exchange, on the one hand, we create our identity, the respect for tradition and a sense of belonging to a community and its history, and, on the other, we are more innovative and tolerant.

Legal acts related to the protection of cultural heritage in Poland

- The Constitution of the Republic of Poland

Article 5

The Republic of Poland shall safeguard the independence and integrity of its territory and ensure the freedoms and rights of persons and citizens, the security of the citizens, safeguard the national heritage and shall ensure the protection of the natural environment pursuant to the principles of sustainable development.

Article 6

1. The Republic of Poland shall provide conditions for the people's equal access to the products of culture which are the source of the Nation's identity, continuity and development.
2. The Republic of Poland shall provide assistance to Poles living abroad to maintain their links with the national cultural heritage.

Article 82

Loyalty to the Republic of Poland, as well as concern for the common good, shall be the duty of every Polish citizen.

- **Act** of 23 July 2003 on the Protection and Guardianship of Monuments (Journal of Law No. 162 item 1568 of 17 September 2003 with later amendments)

Major public entities involved in the protection of cultural heritage in Poland

The Ministry of Culture and National Heritage initiates and coordinates projects related to cultural interactions with other countries, treating them as a key component of interpersonal relationships. For years, Polish culture has met with great respect all over the world, it became our best brand, synonymous with the highest quality. Presentation of Polish culture is one of the important tasks carried out by my Ministry and institutions subordinate to it.



The National Heritage Board of Poland is a state agency that gathers and disseminates information on heritage, sets standards for its protection and conservation, and aims to raise social awareness on the cultural heritage of Poland in order to save it for future generations in accordance with the strategy for sustainable development.



UNESCO World Heritage Sites in Poland

Cultural (14)

- Auschwitz Birkenau German Nazi Concentration and Extermination Camp (1940-1945) (1979)
- Castle of the Teutonic Order in Malbork (1997)
- Centennial Hall in Wrocław (2006)
- Churches of Peace in Jawor and Świdnica (2001)
- Historic Centre of Kraków (1978)
- Historic Centre of Warsaw (1980)
- Kalwaria Zebrzydowska: the Mannerist Architectural and Park Landscape Complex and Pilgrimage Park (1999)
- Medieval Town of Toruń (1997)
- Muskauer Park (2004)
- Old City of Zamość (1992)

- Tarnowskie Góry Lead-Silver-Zinc Mine and its Underground Water Management System (2017)
- Wieliczka and Bochnia Royal Salt Mines (1978, 2008, 2013)
- Wooden Tserkvas of the Carpathian Region in Poland and Ukraine (2013)
- Wooden Churches of Southern Małopolska (2003)

Natural (1)

- Białowieża Forest (1979,1992,2014)

The system of protection of a selected regional product

- Product name: **dumplings (pierogi) with lentil stuffing**
- Location: **Bieliniec** (a village within Ulanów Commune, Nisko County)

Description:

Lentil cultivation has been quite rare in Ulanów commune. This was related to poor soil quality and frequent floods of the San River in the area. However, the inhabitants of the village of Bieliniec cultivated lentils for their own use, not for sale, already in the interwar period.

Lentils were sown in April and cut at the turn of June and July. Mature pods were harvested from the field and threshed. "Then you had to unwrap the plough in a special mill, sieve through a special extruder, and then the cleaned lentil grains were poured into a bag and placed in the chamber" (extract from an ethnographic interview conducted with the inhabitants of Bieliniec). From the obtained grain, the residents prepared various dishes such as lentil soup, pate and the most popular dish dumplings with lentils.

Dumpling dough was made from wheat flour with the addition of eggs and water. The secret of a good dough was to maintain the right proportions of the ingredients, as excessive addition of flour meant that the dough was not soft enough and did not stick together properly. The stuffing was prepared with about 0.5 kg of lentils. The dry seed should have been soaked for about 15 minutes in cold water and then boiled for another 15 minutes. When cooked, the lentils were poured into a colander to drain. The stuffing was prepared from ground lentil grains mixed with finely chopped, fried onion and a bit of salt and pepper. Dumplings prepared according to this recipe were cooked and served on a daily basis, most often in winter and autumn.



System of protection of the product

The product has a well-developed system of protection. The inhabitants of the village of Bieliniec established an association (Towarzystwo Przyjaciół Wsi Bieliniec). One of its statutory tasks is to promote and protect historical and cultural monuments.

In 2013, as a result of the association's efforts, the dish was placed on the List of Traditional Products, kept by the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development. The list includes products whose quality or unique features and properties result from the use of traditional production methods, which are part of the cultural heritage of the region in which they are produced, and are an element of the identity of the local community. Only the production methods used for at least 25 years are considered as traditional.

The List of Traditional Products aims to disseminate information about products manufactured via traditional, historically well-established methods. Thanks to the system of protection and promotion of regional and traditional products, the cultural heritage of the village is also protected, which significantly contributes to increasing the attractiveness of rural areas and the development of agritourism and rural tourism. The quality policy implemented in the European Union also ensures that consumers buy high quality food, which, at the same time, is characterized by a unique, traditional production methods.

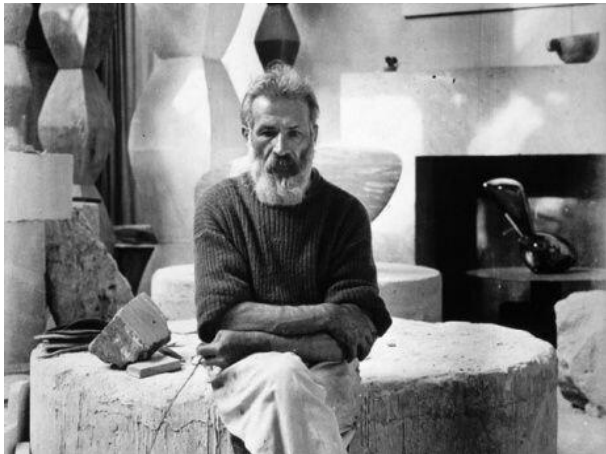
Dumplings with lentils have gained recognition at the regional, national and international level. In 2015, the product received the prestigious Pearl Award. The Pearls were awarded as part of the 12th edition of the Our Culinary Heritage competition - Tastes of Regions. The plebiscite took place during the International Trade Fair of Food Products Polagra Food as part of Poznań International Fair. The members of Bieliniec association attended the event as the representatives of the Subcarpathia Province, Nisko County and the Commune of Ulanów.



POLAGRA FOOD
INTERNATIONAL TRADE FAIR FOR FOOD

The system of protection of cultural heritage in Romania

Constantin Brâncuși



Constantin Brâncuși (February 19, 1876 - March 16, 1957) was a Romanian sculptor, painter and photographer. Considered a pioneer of modernism, one of the most influential sculptors of the 20th century, Brâncuși is called the patriarch of modern sculpture. His art emphasizes clean geometrical lines that balance forms inherent in his materials with the symbolic allusions of representational art. Brâncuși sought inspiration in non-European cultures as a source of primitive exoticism, as did Paul Gauguin, Pablo Picasso, André Derain and others.

Sculptures

The Sculptural Ensemble of Constantin Brâncuși at Târgu Jiu is a homage to the Romanian heroes of the First World War. The ensemble comprises three sculptures: The Table of Silence, The Gate of the Kiss and The Endless Column, on an axis 1,300 m (4,250 ft) long, oriented west to east.



The ensemble is considered to be one of the great works of 20th-century outdoor sculpture. The Endless Column symbolizes the concept of infinity and the infinite sacrifice of the Romanian soldiers. It is considered by Sydney Geist the top point of the modern art.

The Endless Column stacks 17 rhomboidal modules with a half-unit at the top. The incomplete top unit is thought to be the element that expresses the concept of the infinite. Brâncuși experimented with this form as early as 1918, with an oak version now found in the collection of the Museum of Modern Art in New York City. The modules were made in the central workshop of Petroșani (assembled by Brâncuși's friend engineer Ștefan Georgescu-Gorjan (1905–1985), and completed on 27 October 1938. All 17 rhomboidal modules accumulate a total height of 29.3 m. Two other pieces constitute the Ensemble.

The Table of Silence is a circular stone table surrounded by twelve hourglass seats which symbolize time. The Table of Silence represents the moment before the battle in which the combatants were going to participate. Nevertheless, the seats are not located close to the edges of the table.



The Gate of Kiss, of Banpotoc travertine (marble), features a kiss motif on the gate pillars. The transition to another life occurs through The Gate of Kiss. The Ensemble was inaugurated on 27 October 1938. During the “Socialist Realism” epoch, Brâncuși was challenged as an exponent of cosmopolitan bourgeois formalism. However, Brâncuși was “rediscovered” in Romania as a national genius in 1964, and consequently, the Ensemble of **Târgu Jiu was restored, after a long period of degradation.**

The Danube Delta

The Danube Delta is the second largest river delta in Europe, after the Volga Delta, and is the best preserved on the continent. The greater part of the Danube Delta lies in Romania (Tulcea County), while its northern part, on the left bank of the Chilia arm, is situated in Ukraine (Odessa Oblast). Its approximate surface area is 4,152 km² (1,603 sq mi), of which 3,446 km² (1,331 sq mi) is in Romania. With the lagoons of Razim–Sinoe (1,015 km² (392 sq mi) with 865 km² (334 sq mi) water surface), located south of the main delta, the total area of the Danube Delta is 5,165 km² (1,994 sq mi). The Razim–Sinoe lagoon complex is geologically and ecologically related to the delta proper and the combined territory is listed as a World Heritage Site.



Did you know?

- Danube Delta is the largest and most remarkable river wetlands in Europe.
- Danube Delta is the largest home for over 300 year-round & migratory species of birds.
- Danube Delta is still increasing on a yearly basis (67 million tons of alluvium/year).
- Danube Delta’s biodiversity is close to the famous Australia’s Great Reef.
- Danube Delta was on the UNESCO World Heritage in 1991, with several areas off-limits for tourists (more than 50% of the biosphere reserve is intact).



A paradise for birds and fish, a wonderful touristic region, a valuable scientific area, spreading over 5,050 km² the Danube Delta is considered to be the largest and most compact reed area in the world, the richest ornithological fauna in the world (over 300 species), the youngest land in Europe, the broadest sand dunes in Romania, the area with the lowest fogginess, the lowest elevation of a city (Sulina – 3.5 m).

Sighisoara

Sighisoara is a small city in the Transylvania region of Romania, with a history dating back to the 1100s. Back then, the Hungarian king was begging Saxons to move to this part of the world in order to help defend his borders. German craftsmen and artisans took him up on it, and as a result we can see a fairy-tale-like fortified city in the heart of Romania. Climbing up The Clock Tower is an absolute must! Some parts of this building date back to the 14th century, as a lookout point over the city walls.



With cobbled streets, colorful buildings, and a pedestrian-friendly Old Town, it's difficult not to fall in love with Sighisoara. Sighisoara is incredibly colorful.



Sighisoara also has another claim to fame: being the birthplace of Vlad III, also known as Vlad Tepes or Dracula.

Sighisoara is an outstanding testimony to the culture of the Transylvanian Saxons, a culture that is coming to a close after 850 years and will continue to exist only through its architectural and urban monuments.

Sighisoara is an outstanding example of a small fortified city in the border region between the Latin-oriented culture of central Europe and the Byzantine-Orthodox culture of south-eastern Europe.

The apparently unstoppable process of emigration by the Saxons,

the social stratum which formed and upheld the cultural traditions of the region, threatens the survival of their architectural heritage as well.

Sarmizegetusa

Sarmizegetusa was the capital and the most important military, religious and political centre of the Dacians prior to the wars with the Roman Empire. Erected on top of a 1200 m high mountain, the fortress, comprising six citadels, was the core of a strategic defensive system in the Orăștie Mountains.



The sanctuaries were built outside the city, on a terrace. They reach a paved road. The best known are andesite Sun and Great Sanctuary. Great sanctuary was used as a calendar. Over time there was a rumor that

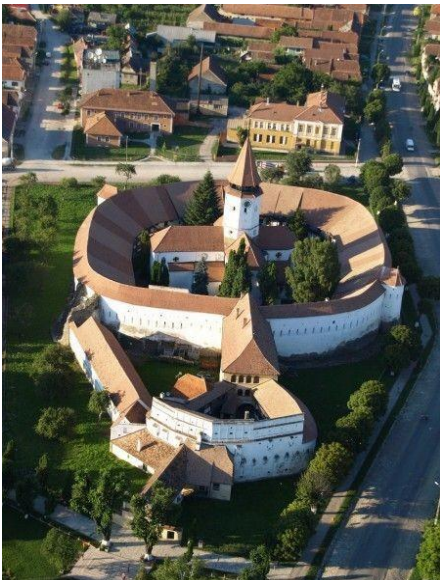
this place would be magical, showing subtle energies. It has a diameter of 30 meters.

Downright fascinating is that Dacians knew the secrets of astronomy and had a very precise way to calculate the time. Sun andesite is a surprisingly accurate calendar. This sanctuary is a circular platform with 10 rays on the outer circumference. It can be compared to the famous Mayan calendar. However, it remains a mystery how it was built.

The ruins of Ulpia Traiana Sarmisegetuza stand for the most interesting touristic attraction in the area, offering the tourists the image of a Roman city, resembling many others, with the Forum, palace of the augustals, the thermae, the amphitheatre, the public and private institutions. There was a museum inaugurated in 1982. We can see many exposed objects in silver and bronze, ceramics, coin, funeral stones.

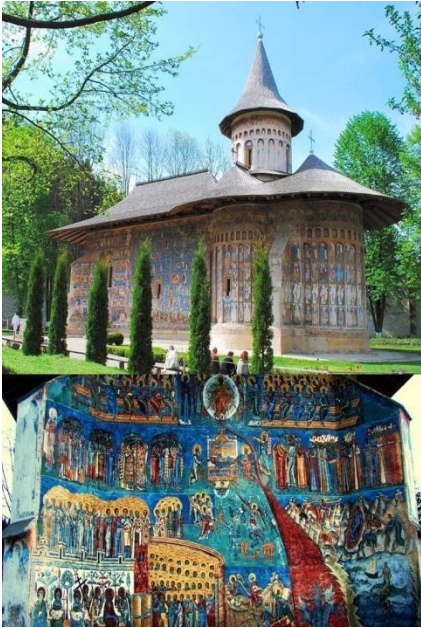


Villages with fortified churches in Transylvania



The south-eastern Transylvania region in Romania currently has one of the highest numbers of existing fortified churches from the 13th to 16th century. It has more than 150 well preserved fortified churches of a great variety of architectural styles. Listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site, Villages with Fortified Churches in Transylvania are seven villages, founded by the Transylvanian Saxons. The Prejmer fortified church is a Lutheran fortified church, in Transylvania, Romania and the ethnographic area of the Burzenland. The church was founded by the Germanic Teutonic Knights, and then was eventually taken over by the Transylvanian Saxon community. Initially Roman Catholic, it became Lutheran following the Reformation. Together with the surrounding village, the church forms part of the villages with fortified churches in Transylvania UNESCO World Heritage Site.

The Voroneț Monastery



The Voroneț Monastery is a medieval monastery in the Romanian village of Voroneț, now a part of the town Gura Humorului. The monastery was constructed by Stephen the Great in 1488 over a period of 3 months and 3 weeks to commemorate the victory at Battle of Vaslui. Often known as the “Sistine Chapel of the East”, the frescoes at Voroneț feature an intense shade of blue known in Romania as “Voroneț blue”. The church is one of the Painted churches of Moldavia listed in UNESCO’s list of World Heritage Sites.

The Wooden churches of Maramureș



The Wooden churches of Maramureș in the Maramureș region of northern Transylvania are a group of almost one hundred wooden churches from Maramureș that survived for hundreds of years, bringing to the present the talent and imagination of the local artisans who built them in the unique “Gothic style of Maramureș”. Eight of these wooden churches of Maramureș are a part of Romania’s UNESCO World Heritage Sites, included on this famous list for their outstanding cultural value. The wooden church of Surdești is without doubt one of the most renowned tourist attractions in Romania. Its imposing 72 meters make it one of the highest oak buildings in the world.

Pottery– Olt County, Romania-regional product



It is a general purpose ceramic out of which of most interest are the jugs, jars, pots of different sizes for cooking food on the hearth, taier and barrels to extract butter, etc.. Much better represented from the point of view of objects is the Oboga potteries, famous for its diversity of ceramic forms. We refer to "oțetar" alveolate girdles, barrels, the zoomorphic and anthropomorphic jugs with decoration applied as a little snakes and frogs, to the taier aviemore motifs, colored in green, brown, yellow, to figurines and flasks.

What distinguishes the Oboga ceramics from other potteries is the character of sculptural forms.

The ability to form the plastic symbols, old habits of pitcher types illustrated as wedding and baby stork with children's heads applied to the body vessel. Also as a feature of masters of vessels, Oboga collection department is recording some pieces of the settlements on the surface, the master name and the name of the ornamental motif The flourishing age of Oboga center was in the late nineteenth century and beginning of the twentieth century.

Another famous pottery center for the art of its products is Horezu that appeared together with the rise of Horezu monastery made by Constantin Brancoveanu, to meet the needs of the new foundations of courts and aristocratic surroundings usually common at that time. Ceramics produced here was imposed by technical innovation and responsiveness to decorative era adopting and enriching its repertoire enamel decoration and color. Used reasons are varied and the most common are: snail, star, stylized flowers, rooster fish, etc.. They are decorated with choir and jay-shaped wire brush bristles. Oboga ceramics is a local product that is nationally recognized.



Baking hearth



The process of production



The system of protection of cultural heritage in Slovakia

In December 2001, the National Council of the Slovak Republic adopted Act no. 49/2002 Z.z. on the protection of the monument fund, which establishes a specialized state administration in the field of conservation of the monument fund.

The Slovak Monument Fund consists of national cultural monuments, monument reservations, monument zones and in particular World Heritage Sites.

Basic terms

The Monument Fund is a collection of movables and immovable property declared by law as national cultural monuments, monument reservations and monument zones.

A cultural monument is a movable or an immovable thing of monumental value, which is declared for cultural preservation for reasons of protection. Cultural monuments and monument areas are registered in the Central List of the Monument Fund, which provides basic data for its protection.

A monument reservation is a territory with a comprehensive historical settlement and a large concentration of immovable cultural heritage or territory with groups of significant archaeological finds and archaeological sites that can be topographically defined.

A monument zone is an area with a historic settlement, a territory of a cultural landscape with monumental values or a territory with archaeological finds and archaeological finds that can be topographically defined.



Properties inscribed on the world heritage list

Cultural heritage

Bardejov town conservation reserve



Bardejov is a small but exceptionally complete and well-preserved example of a fortified medieval town. The town's surviving urban plan, with a regular division of streets around a spacious market square, is an indication of European civilization from the 13th to 14th centuries.

Burghers' houses, dating from the first half of the 15th century, surround three sides of the square and document the highly developed burgher culture. The fourth side of the square is closed by the Roman Catholic Church of St. Giles, a three-apsed

Gothic basilica with a precious collection of eleven late Gothic altars.

Historic Town of Banská Štiavnica and the Technical Monuments in its Vicinity



Over the centuries, the town of Banská Štiavnica was visited by many outstanding engineers and scientists who contributed to its fame. The old medieval mining centre grew into a town with Renaissance palaces, 16th-century churches, elegant squares and castles.

The town of Banská Štiavnica, the oldest mining town in Slovakia, was established in the 13th century. It is characterized by the grand Late Gothic and Renaissance burgher houses, the town hall, and the Late Gothic Church of Saint Catherine. The establishment of the first Mining and Forestry Academy in Europe in 1762 demonstrates the importance of this town as a centre for the education of mining experts.

Vlkolínec



Vlkolínec, situated in the centre of Slovakia, is a remarkably intact settlement of 45 buildings with the traditional features of a central European village. It is the region's most complete group of these kinds of traditional log houses, often found in mountainous areas.

The urban layout can be traced to this era as records indicate five streets in place by 1469. However, most of the surviving buildings date to the 19th century. These include 43 nearly intact homesteads that retain a multitude of archaic building elements, the Church of the Annunciation of the Virgin Mary

built in 1875, a bell tower built in 1770 and a school.

Levoča, Spišský Hrad and the Associated Cultural Monuments

Spišský Hrad has one of the largest ensembles of 13th and 14th century military, political and religious

buildings in eastern Europe, and its Romanesque and Gothic architecture has remained remarkably intact.



The extended site features the addition of the historic town-centre of Levoča founded in the 13th and 14th centuries within fortifications. A remarkable collection of polychrome works in the Late Gothic style, including an 18.6 metre high altarpiece by completed around 1510 by Master Paul.

Wooden Churches of the Slovak part of the Carpathian Mountain Area

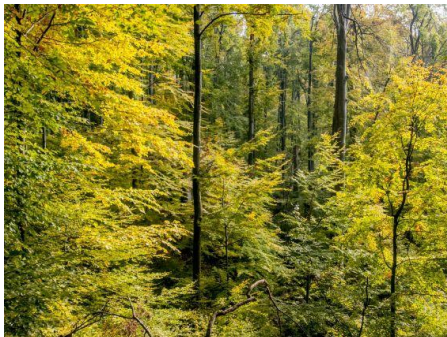


The Wooden Churches of the Slovak part of the Carpathian Mountain Area inscribed on the World Heritage List consist of two Roman Catholic, three Protestant and three Greek Orthodox churches built between the 16th and 18th centuries.

The property presents good examples of a rich local tradition of religious architecture, marked by the meeting of Latin and Byzantine cultures.

Natural heritage

Ancient and Primeval Beech Forests of the Carpathians and Other Regions of Europe



This transboundary property stretches over 12 countries. Since the end of the last Ice Age, European Beech spread from a few isolated refuge areas in the Alps, Carpathians, Dinarides, Mediterranean and Pyrenees over a short period of a few thousand years in a process that is still ongoing.

Caves of Aggtelek Karst and Slovak Karst



The variety of formations and the fact that they are concentrated in a restricted area means that the 712 caves currently identified make up a typical temperate-zone karstic system.

Caves included are Baradla and Domica complex, Gombasek Cave, Silica Ice Cave, Dobšinská Ice Cave, Ochtinská Aragonite Cave and Jasovská Cave.

Intangible cultural heritage

5 elements inscribed are Multipart singing of Horehronie (2017), Puppetry in Slovakia and Czechia (2016), Bagpipe culture (2015), Music of Terchová (2013), Fujara and its music (2008).



Multipart singing of Horehronie



Fujara



Music of Terchová



Puppetry

The system of protection of cultural heritage in Lithuania

Protected areas contain 15,6 % of Lithuania's territory. The general system of protected areas is divided into strict reserves, reserves, national parks and regional parks.

Strict reserves



All economic activity in strict reserves is forbidden. Within Lithuania, there are three state strict nature reserves (Čepkeliai, Kamanos and Viešvilė) and two state strict cultural reserves (Kernavė and Vilnius Castles), 36 nature and three cultural strict reserves within complex protected areas and one small district reserve (Dubrava).

Reserves



The Reserves were established for the protection of wild birds, natural habitats, wild flora and fauna. There are 355 reserves in Lithuania.

National Parks



National parks are large-scale protected areas that have been established in areas that are from a natural, cultural and recreational aspect especially valuable. There are five national parks in Lithuania, one of which is historical. They are called Aukštaitija, Dzūkija, Curonian Spit, Trakai Historical and Žemaitija national parks.

Regional parks



There are 30 regional parks in Lithuania. Lithuania's regional parks can be divided into the following categories according to their general landscape type:

1. Coastal and lagoon regional parks
 - a. coastal cliff (Pajūris)
 - b. lagoon valley (Kaunas Lagoon);
2. River valley regional parks
 - a. deep valley (Dubysa, Krekenava, Pagramantis, Panemuniai, Salantai)
 - b. shallow valley (Venta, Dieveniškiai historical)
 - c. delta valley (Nemunas Delta)
 - d. great loops (Nemunas Loops, Neris), riverside (Ram bynas)
3. Forested lake regions and hilly regional parks:
 - a. sub-valley gullies (Pavilniai)
 - b. valley lake regions (Labanoras)
 - c. valley lake hills (Anykščiai, Gražutė, Kurtuvėnai, Sirvėta, Verkiai)
 - d. lake hills (Aukštadvaris, Varniai)
 - e. lakeshore hills (Vištytis)
 - f. lakes (Asveja, Meteliai, Sartai, Veisiejai)
4. Plateau and plain regional parks
 - a. karst plain (Biržai)
 - b. lake plateaus (Tytuvėnai)
 - c. river plains (Žagarė)

Lithuania has 4 UNESCO heritage sites, 3 inscriptions of its art and traditions in UNESCO immaterial world heritage, 1 site on the UNESCO tentative list, 1 suggested UNESCO site and 1 inscription in the UNESCO Memory of the World.

The historic center of Vilnius



In 1994, the Vilnius historic centre was inscribed on the UNESCO World heritage list as having outstanding universal value (under II. and IV. criteria of selection). The historic part of the city was formed in the 14-18th century and covered the area of 359.5 hectares. In its prospering times Vilnius made a great influence on cultural and architectural development of the whole region of Central and Eastern Europe. The authentic buildings that served for defensive, residential, representative and spiritual purposes have been preserved in the Old Town of Vilnius. Here you can find the features of Gothic, Renaissance, Baroque and Classical architectural styles. The architecture of the city is unique, because all the styles merge into one harmonious aesthetical unit.



In today's international cultural context the Vilnius historic centre bears witness not only to the heritage of a particular civilization but also to an exceptional cultural lifestyle.

Perhaps the most impressive building is the Vilnius Cathedral and its Tower of classicism style located in Vilnius Old Town, on the Cathedral Square. In addition, many other estates worth visiting are located around it. The

recently rebuilt Royal Palace of Lithuania welcomes visitors to admire the authentic outside and interior.

Gediminas castle erected on the Castle (Pilies, lit.) hill, an outstanding monument for the Grand Duke of Lithuania Gediminas on the Cathedral square also attracts visitors. Visitors exploring Vilnius Old Town must pass the famous Pilies (Castle) Street full of cosy restaurants and shops. The Pilies street leads straight to the Town Hall Square where various events are usually held. Over there the famous Vokiečių (German) street is located.

The Curonian Spit



The Curonian Spit was inscribed on the World Heritage List in 2000. This cultural landscape, created by human hands in more than 200 years, under selection criterion, was recognised as an exceptional example of traditional settlement or use of land or sea in a certain area. The cultural landscape of unique beauty of the Curonian Spit is a result of continuous encounter of natural factors and human effort.

Back in the 14th century, people started changing the relief of the Curonian Spit, which had been formed by nature out of surplus sand 5,000 years ago. In the 14th century, the Curonian Spit saw the emergence of a network of sedentary settlements and more intense economic activities. In the 14-18th centuries, the narrow strip of land between the Curonian Lagoon and the Baltic Sea, due to constant falling of trees, witnessed a degradation of the natural balance, which resulted in the formation of moving sand dunes.



The moving sand turned one settlement into a desert. In order to stop the erosion, the end of the 18th century marked the start of major works, which have determined global exclusivity of the Curonian Spit. In order to stop the moving of sand dunes and not to allow changes of their surface, the dunes were reinforced, artificial relief barriers were built and vegetation was planted. In this way people stopped the erosion and sand storms, reinforced the Grand Dunes and formed, along the entire Spit, a protective ridge of the Baltic

coast. Currently, this is the only territory in the world of such dimensions (98 kilometres long and 0.4–4 kilometres wide), where more than half of the vegetation was planted by people. Due to special natural conditions, the works of relief reinforcement and vegetation planting on the Curonian Spit are still important.

Windblown, moving dunes have remained and are preserved in Nagliai and Grobštis nature reserves as well as in the Parnidis landscape reserve. Apart from cultural landscape, objects of archaeological, historical, urban and architectural heritage, disclosing the people's lifestyle which evolved under exceptional conditions, are preserved on the Curonian Spit.

Kernavė Archaeological Site



The uniqueness of the Kernavė Archaeological Site, inscribed on the World Heritage List in 2004 under selection criteria and has also been determined by human activities. This territory is a site witnessing a cultural tradition of civilisation and an exceptional example of buildings, the architectural ensemble and landscape of a certain period in the history of humanity.

The complex of archaeological and historical properties located in Kernavė reflects the stages of evolution of a settlement on the valley of the River Neris from the Stone Age until the 13-14th century. Kernavė was first mentioned in written documents in 1279. At that time, it was a pagan medieval city on the Pajauta valley, with the residence of the Duke on the central mound. This political and economic centre with flourishing trade and the development of crafts by professional masters was destroyed in 1390 during an attack of Teutonic knights. A subsequent settlement emerged on the upper terrace, on the site of the current town of Kernavė. The site of the old medieval city still contains untouched cultural layers from the end of the 14th century, which made it possible to reconstruct the urban framework of the city and restore the fragments of everyday life of the inhabitants.



Currently, the territory of the State Cultural Reserve of Kernavė covers 194.4 hectares, where 18 objects of archaeological, historical and architectural heritage are preserved.

The Kernavė Archaeological Site with the remaining artefacts reflecting the lifestyle of a medieval city of the last pagan state in Europe is also unique because its burial sites and other archaeological findings confirm the junction and coexistence of the pagan and Christian cultures.

Cross-crafting and its symbolism



Cross-crafting and its symbolism in Lithuania, a unique cultural tradition having no analogues in the world, in 2001 was listed by UNESCO among the masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity.

A very specific tradition of cross-crafting and its symbolism started to develop in the 15th century when Lithuania, the last pagan country in Europe, officially and entirely became a catholic country. For a long time new ideas of Christianity and antique local pagan traditions were very closely related in the local mentality.

This dualism obviously was reflected in the cross-crafting tradition, where symbols of both religions could be found. Later, with incorporation of Lithuania into the orthodox Russian Empire in the 19th century or under the Soviet regime in the 20th

century, typical wooden Lithuanian crosses became a symbol of national and religious identity.



The Lithuanian traditional crosses, pillar-type crosses and shrines could be found not only in cemeteries and churchyards, but on the premises of almost every farmstead, along the roadsides, in fields and villages, and even in forests. Cross-crafting, as a branch of traditional folk art, entails not only the making of the monument itself, but also the customs and rituals related to a particular monument.



The current panorama of cross-crafting in Lithuania is diverse, dynamic and a subject to constant change, as new crosses continue to be built. One of the most significant monuments - now the world famous Hill of Crosses near Šiauliai features thousands of crosses and has become a kind of symbol of Lithuanian cross-crafting.

The Baltic song and dance



In 2003, the Baltic Song and Dance Celebrations a common heritage of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia were listed by UNESCO among the masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity.



The Song and Dance Celebrations are held every four years in Lithuania. The traditional festivals run on for several days and gather as many as 40,000 singers, musicians and dancers from Baltic and other countries. Most of the participants of the festivals belong to amateur choirs and dance groups. Their repertoires reflect a wide range of musical traditions in the Baltic States, from the most ancient folk songs to contemporary compositions. Directed by professional choir conductors, bandleaders and dance instructors, many singers and dancers practise throughout the year in community centres and local cultural institutions.

Lithuanian Sutartinės/Multipart songs

On 16 November 2010, during the 5th session of the Inter-governmental Committee on Protection of Intangible Cultural Heritage held in Nairobi (Kenya), Lithuanian polyphonic songs were inscribed on the UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.



Lithuanian multipart songs (Sutartinės - their Lithuanian name derives from the verb "sutarti", which means "to accord", "to be in harmony") is a unique phenomenon of Lithuanian traditional music, a particularly old form of polyphony. They are mostly sung by women, while instrumental music is played by men with panpipes, aerophones,

chordophones and other instruments. A characteristic feature of Lithuanian multipart songs is simultaneous sound of different melodies and different texts (notional and onomatopoeic).