



Commission proposes stronger recognition of European heritage sites*

Brussels, 23 October 2026

The European Commission has proposed to renew and reinforce the legal framework of the [European Heritage Label](#). The scheme was adopted in 2011 aiming to offer a recognition awarded by the European Union to sites - buildings, monuments, documents - of exceptional symbolic value that have played a key role in shaping Europe's history, culture, and integration.

The proposal aims to give the initiative new impetus and strengthen its European dimension, showcasing a living network of sites that together tell the story of Europe giving greater recognition to the cultural experiences that these sites offer.

As part of this, the proposal includes the renewal of the action's name, from European Heritage Label to European Heritage List.

Under the proposal, a prize would reward selected and monitored sites for their impact on the ground, alongside measures providing greater visibility, support and coordination. The new framework would make it easier for sites to take part and work together, give young people a stronger voice, and bring changes to the selection and monitoring process, with clearer criteria and procedures.

Among the aims of the proposal is the increase of European citizens' understanding of the history of Europe and the building of the Union. It is also expected to contribute to the attractiveness, economic, and sustainable development of regions where the sites are located, in particular through cultural tourism. Furthermore, the European Heritage List will extend its recognition to sites in Iceland, Liechtenstein, and Norway, as well as to candidate countries or potential candidates for EU membership associated to the [Creative Europe programme](#) or its successors.

Next steps

The Commission proposal will now be negotiated at the European Parliament and at the Council.

Background

Today, the European Heritage Label connects [80 sites spread across over 300 locations in 23 member states](#).

Supported by the EU's [Creative Europe programme](#), the European Heritage Label was established in 2011.

For more information

[Proposal](#)

[Application process for the European Heritage Label - Culture and Creativity](#)

[European Commission takes the European Heritage Label to the next step of its evolution | Culture and Creativity](#)

* Updated at 18:45 CEST, 23/10/2026.

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Quote(s):

"Present and future generations deserve to engage with Europe's shared heritage, history, and values. These sites reflect our common long journey of European integration, as well as the challenges we overcame along the way. The European Heritage List will build on the action's original vision, while strengthening its network and establishing a new trusted mark of high-quality and excellence. These changes will raise the action's profile and create new cultural experiences for all generations."

Glenn Micallef, Commissioner for Intergenerational Fairness, Youth, Culture and Sport

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