

European Historic Houses Association

The present paper follows the development of the new Facility framework “Creative Europe” launched by the European Commission for the period 2014-2020

The European Historic Houses Association welcomes with great interest the creation of the Creative Europe Programme. We especially wish to applaud the significant increase of the amount of the budget dedicated to the cultural and creative sectors.

We emphasize the link between cultural heritage and economic and social growth and we estimate that the “challenges from globalisation” can be better addressed if we understand properly our common roots and traditions.

In order to meet the Commission 2020 strategy, the historic buildings owners need to be involved at all stages of the EU policy development on cultural aspects as they represent a major potential for Europe to create a true European cultural identity through “the safeguarding and promotion of European and linguistic diversity”¹. European Heritage remains for its essential part into private hands. Thank to its reputation, the image of the historic building and its gardens brings certain richness to its immediate environment. Certain families are struggling hard since many generations to ensure these buildings, farms, mills, considered as important European heritage can be maintained into good conditions.

The European Historic Houses Association calls on:

- The European Commission to **provide simple and tailored-made financial tools to help our members to preserve their buildings and parks which represent common goods for the all society**. More and more is being demanded from historic houses owners and land managers. They have, as catalysts of European cultural identity, an important role in helping to foster tourism, and developing a cultural education through social inclusion. Those family estates are really often run as business enterprises “SME” and are part of the creative sectors operators. In that sense, we welcome the creation of a new financial Facility and hope it will be dedicated to safeguard cultural heritage notably through private initiatives.
- **A real impulse toward a cultural tourism policy** which is a major European challenge and, as such, should be fully addressed by European policies, especially through efficient cultural programmes and its financial provisions. This “potential European added value” in terms of economic and social impact was addressed in the EU council decision that stated “European cultural heritage is of exceptional economic importance for the tourism industry, generating an estimated annual revenue of EUR 335 billion, and many of the 9 million jobs in the tourism sector are linked to it directly or indirectly. The market for conservation of this heritage is estimated at some EUR 5 billion per year.”²

About the European Historic Houses Association (EHHA)

The European Historic Houses is a European association based in Brussels, voicing the interests of historic houses owners. It aims its work towards major issues linked to culture heritage such as environmental issues (PPP Directive), fiscal issues (reduced VAT on restoration and maintenance work to historic monuments), the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive (EPBD) and security issues (theft, keeping and illicit trafficking of cultural goods). The Association brings together 20 national members and represents more than 50,000 historic houses in Europe. For more information: www.europeanhistorichouses.org

¹ European Commission, *Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on establishing the Creative Europe Programme*, Brussels, COM (2011) 785/2, p. 7.

² 3035th Competitiveness Council meeting Luxembourg, 12 October 2010