PRESS RELEASE

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TOWARDS BUILDING A STRONG LEGACY OF THE 2018 EUROPEAN YEAR OF CULTURAL HERITAGE

2018 was the European Year of Cultural Heritage (EYCH). Over 6.2 million people took part in more than 11,700 events organised across 37 countries. The European Historic Houses Association (EHH) wishes to draw the outcomes of the activities organized during the Year, to build a strong legacy of the Year for owners-managers of historic houses.

The **European Private Heritage Week** (May 24-27) was a great success gathering 642 houses opening in 17 countries and more than **272.000 visitors**. A picnic was organized in 9 houses in Romania, while 39 houses open freely in Greece, 80 in Switzerland, and as much as 130 houses across three Baltic countries. The Latvian association held a contest for high-school pupils 'My business model for a heritage house'. The 2019 edition will be held on May 16-19, be ready!

EHH also organized the European Heritage Photographer of the Year contest. The **20 winning photographs** were exhibited at the Committee of Regions on November 6, during EHH's Conference 'Enhancing sustainable entrepreneurship for private historic houses'.

Our main goal is that **cultural heritage remains high on the political agenda after 2018**, and to continue supporting measures benefiting owners of heritage houses. We also have to **secure sustainable sources of funding for cultural heritage**, notably by ensuring the increase of budget of the Creative Europe program, but also by giving a greater place for cultural heritage in EU structural funds.

The EHH welcomes the proposed increase of budget of the Creative Europe program; and encourages the European Commission to **continue the structured dialogue with cultural heritage stakeholders beyond 2018**.

One of our main tools to build this legacy will be the project run together with the European Landowners Organization, **'Heritage Houses for Europe. Exchange & Innovate'**. The project will **build bridges with family-owned heritage houses** by:
- ❖ Measuring the **positive impact of family-owned heritage houses** in Europe and raising-awareness on the sector
- ❖ Analysing innovative replicable business models and **creating tools supporting managers for the sustainable preservation of family-owned heritage houses**
- ❖ Issue **recommendations towards the EU institutions** unleashing the sectors' potential.

EHH is extremely pleased that the project has been officially mentioned in the **Framework for Action on Cultural Heritage**, which will build the legacy of the 2018 EYCH, presented on December 7 by Commissioner Tibor Navracsics at the Year's closing ceremony in Vienna.

The European Historic Houses (EHH) gathers 24 national associations of owners-managers of private historic houses and gardens in 22 European countries. We work to promote owners-managers' interests in several policy areas at a European level and act as a platform sharing best-practices among our members.

EHH encourages decision makers and citizens to acknowledge the enormous amount of effort, time, passion and money which owners put into saving and preserving private built heritage in Europe for our future generations. Overall, private owners look after 41% of our heritage assets in Europe – so it's very important that we encourage good maintenance with financial and educational support.