

EUROPEAN HERITAGE DAYS COME BACK AGAIN!



Is it September? Then European Heritage Days (EHDs) must be here again. EHDs are meant to show various places of cultural importance to the widest public and thus during these days the doors of the most interesting monuments, buildings, premises and areas are opened to the public all around Europe.

This popular event takes place every year in 49 European countries and it is a joint action of the Council of Europe and the European Commission. This year, the celebrations marking the 16th EHDs will take place on 21-23 September in Belgrade in the context of the Serbian Chairmanship of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe. The ceremony will take place at Kalemegdan Belgrade Fortress, which is the remarkable core and the oldest section of the urban area of Belgrade where the city population was concentrated for centuries.

The EHDs were launched in 1991 and the number of visitors rises every year. It is estimated that 2007 EHDs will attract some 20 million visitors to more than 30,000 participating monuments and sites in all the 49 countries. The main goal of this initiative is to raise citizens' awareness of Europe's cultural diversity and richness. It also should help to create a sense of shared identity among all Europeans. So far it seems that the EHDs have succeeded in stimulating the civil society's participation and also in the involvement of young people into the EHDs activities.

The organization of the EHDs is naturally quite complex. The participating countries do their part as well as the Directorate General of the European Commission. A very important role plays an external Liaison Office, which assists with the coordination of the EHDs. In 2006 and 2007, this task was entrusted to [Europa Nostra](#), a pan-European Federation of Heritage NGOs.

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