

# LIVING RELIGIOUS HERITAGE

## FRH IS WHERE PEOPLE MEET RELIGIOUS HERITAGE IN THE HEART OF EUROPE

*The Future for Religious Heritage (FRH) is Europe's network promoting the cultural importance and potential of more than 500,000 religious heritage sites across Europe. We are non-faith based and open to everyone. We believe that religious heritage is an unparalleled resource for exploring and understanding the shared culture of Europe. We support all types of religious heritage which plays a strong role in European society, through preservation, dialogue, education, openness and tolerance. Religious Heritage has inspired, informed and been a major part of European culture for thousands of years; we are committed to and convinced that it should continue to do so in the Future of Europe.*

*In 2021 FRH hosted 4 hybrid events, under the theme of "Living Religious Heritage" bringing together policy makers, experts, academics, ngo's and volunteers working in the field of religious heritage in a series of inspiring debates on the subject of CONTINUITY:*

- Continuity in Function or use
- Continuity in Community Connection and Dialogue
- Continuity in Evolving Cultural Expressions and
- Continuity in Care and Safeguarding

*From our 4 hybrid events FRH has established **10 key findings** about how and **why religious heritage is such an important resource to contributing to the Future of Europe**. FRH and its members representing religious heritage across Europe commit to build on the strong messages formulated to establish appropriate follow-up actions. And invite everybody to do so.*

## FUTURE FOR RELIGIOUS HERITAGE IS OFFICIAL PARTNER OF:



New European Bauhaus  
beautiful | sustainable | together 

WE ARE A MEMBER OF THE



Climate Heritage  
NETWORK  
Mobilising arts, culture & cultural heritage for  
#climateaction



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## RELIGIOUS HERITAGE A VALUABLE RESOURCE FOR THE FUTURE OF EUROPE

### 1 RELIGIOUS HERITAGE: KEY COMPONENT OF EUROPEAN IDENTITY

*Religious Heritage, tangible and intangible, is a key component of European identity and contributes to the attractiveness and the rich cultural history of Europe's regions, cities, towns, villages and rural areas.*

*FRH is committed to raising awareness and advocating for the safeguarding of Europe's largest repository of cultural, artistic and historical heritage.*

### 2 RELIGIOUS HERITAGE: SOURCE OF LOCAL, NATIONAL AND EUROPEAN PRIDE

*Religious Heritage provides European countries and regions with unique insights into past history, telling fascinating stories that provide excellent marketing tools for cultural tourism and the attraction of investment into local areas.*

### 3 RELIGIOUS HERITAGE: MAJOR JOB CREATOR

*Religious Heritage has an ability to continue to be a major job creator, as it has been through the centuries. Not only in religious areas but in conservation and maintenance with a range of craft skills, the creation of entrepreneurial activities and as a major contributor to tourism.*

### 4 STUDY THE PAST TO DEFINE THE FUTURE

*Throughout the centuries Religious Heritage has always been an important part of Europe's cultural creativity and innovation. Artistically, architecturally, musically, use of the natural world are only some of the areas of expertise within religious heritage. New generations of young people can add in virtual reality and digital technologies, together with other aspects of education and training to enrich what exists already.*

### 5 RELIGIOUS HERITAGE HELPS COMMUNITIES REALISE THEIR POTENTIALS

*Religious Heritage continues to be part of heritage projects in Europe that demonstrate a good return on expenditure and pay-back to local authorities that have invested in them. Continued investment in such projects will help communities, particularly in deprived rural areas to realise their potentials, providing training and employment, for example using religious buildings as community hubs.*

# FRH 10 KEY FINDINGS

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## 6 RELIGIOUS HERITAGE SUPPORTS EFFORTS TO CREATE SUSTAINABLE, ECO-FOCUSED ECONOMIES

*Re-use and regeneration are very important aspects of the work of organisations such as FRH in creating new uses for religious buildings no longer in active use and adding to the goals of a net-zero policy for Europe. Protection and revitalization of this historic building stock is imperative, rather than demolition.*

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## 7 RELIGIOUS HERITAGE BRINGS ECONOMIC BENEFITS AND CROSS-SECTORAL COOPERATION

*Quality of life projects, cross-sectoral approaches bringing together Religious Heritage with sports and health initiatives for example are all important parts of cultural heritage. These can be particularly attractive to younger generations. Cross sectoral cooperation enables religious heritage to work with intergenerational, intercultural contacts, face to face interaction, and gives a sense of belonging and also creates a mutual understanding between people.*

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## 8 RELIGIOUS HERITAGE CONTRIBUTES TO CREATING A LIVEABLE SOCIETY

*The new and extended uses for religious buildings, particularly in rural areas can be catalysts for ensuring that rural communities remain strongly local, stopping the drift of young people to towns and cities and preventing the move to rural areas of too many non-contributors to local communities.*

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## 9 RELIGIOUS HERITAGE CONTRIBUTES TO THE UNDERSTANDING OF EU HISTORY

*Religious Heritage has a great deal to contribute to the understanding and learning of European history. In particular young people of all ages need to know more about their cultural roots and the place of Religious Heritage in them. Changing ignorance into knowledge is helpful for everyone. There are many ways for knowledge transfer and the more innovative the better.*

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## 10 RELIGIOUS HERITAGE: A STRATEGIC RESOURCE FOR THE FUTURE OF EUROPE

*A combination of the above points will help to build social and cultural cohesion in Europe for all its citizens. Religious Heritage, as has been shown, must be an important part of this and is a valuable resource for all those working across cultural and heritage fields. In recognising its full potential Religious heritage will be a strategic resource for “smart, sustainable and eco-focused economies” and a catalyst for building ‘inclusive, innovative and reflective societies’.*