



Project overview

Proposed Budget

US\$ 150 000

Duration

24 months

Beneficiaries

Global

Category

Conservation

Global strategy



NATIONAL
COMMISSION
OF THE
REPUBLIC OF
BELARUS
FOR UNESCO



Identification and Promotion of Muslim Heritage in Central Europe



The Muslim heritage of Central Europe is very rich. It is a synthesis of Eastern and European cultural elements, embodied in the values of tangible and intangible culture. This are primarily mosques and mizars (cemeteries), as well as the book heritage, multilingual literary works, as well as so-called “memorial congresses” («zjazdy»). This heritage is a testimony of the richness of intercultural exchanges and peaceful coexistence between communities.

This project will offer a platform for dialogue and exchange of experiences among all relevant stakeholders, including the representatives of the various religious communities of Central Europe.

This project aims to strengthen identification, protection, management and sustainable use of the Muslim tangible cultural heritage in Central Europe. It will assist the authorities of the Republic of Belarus and other involved States Parties to inventory, study and promote this heritage within the framework of the World Heritage Convention.

As previously highlighted at the 40th session of the World Heritage Committee (Document WHC/16/40.COM/5D, Istanbul, 2016), the properties of religious interest are no longer considered only as cultural, religious, sacred or holy sites, but also as “educational places” for enhancing mutual respect, knowledge and dialogue between religious communities.

Within the United Nations system, UNESCO’s leading role is to support this intercultural and interreligious dialogue and to ensure the conditions for development of a universal vision for the protection of heritage of religious interest and to coordinate the implementation of activities world-wide.



This project can be download here:

<http://whc.unesco.org/en/activities/1043>



Context

In December 2019, the Minister of Culture of the Republic of Belarus informed UNESCO that an international conference on “The Muslim Heritage of Central Europe” is being planned and requested UNESCO to provide its advisory assistance.

To date, the State List of Historical and Cultural Values of the Republic of Belarus includes 3 movable objects of the Muslim heritage. This is mainly the heritage of Tatars - an ethnic religious group that developed on the territory of the former medieval state - the Grand Duchy of Lithuania in the 14-16 centuries and has retained its originality until now, continuing to exist on the territory of modern countries - Belarus, Lithuania and Poland. In addition, more than 200 monuments of Tatar book culture are registered in the collections of libraries and museums in Belarus.



All these properties are under the state protection, stipulated by the legislation of the Republic of Belarus. Many of the monuments, such as mosques, mizars, have retained their previous functions, are in good condition and continue to be used by local communities. However, an inventory of Muslim heritage in Belarus is far from complete. A great number of monuments are still waiting for their study as well as many aspects of the European Muslim history and culture also need in more deep research. Unfortunately, the history and culture of small groups for a long time did not attract enough attention of researchers and related support.

Given the historical, cultural and typological commonality of the Muslim heritage of Belarus, Lithuania and Poland, it is necessary to combine efforts for researching and inventorying it, at least in the territory of these states, involving representatives of Muslim communities themselves, as well as, if possible, researchers from other interested countries. A preliminary discussion of this topic has already been held by the Republic of Belarus in the frameworks of a series of bilateral meetings with Poland and Lithuania.

Bringing together on the international, regional and national levels for studying the Muslims' cultural heritage potential of Central Europe will help respond to take concrete measures for its preservation and effective use with a view to the sustainable development of Muslim communities and their integration into the common European space.

UNESCO is deeply committed to assisting States Parties in their efforts to protect heritage in all its forms. This proposal is fully in line with UNESCO's mandate, as well as relevant Decisions adopted by the World Heritage Committee.

The activity will be implemented within the framework of the UNESCO Initiative on Heritage of Religious Interest and in line with the Global Strategy for a Representative, Balanced and Credible World Heritage List, aiming to ensure that the List reflects the world's cultural and natural diversity of outstanding universal value.



Objectives

The overarching goal is the **identification and promotion of the Muslim cultural heritage of Central Europe**. More specifically, guidance and advisory assistance will be provided by the World Heritage Centre to the relevant national authorities:

1. to conduct, by the relevant institutions of the Republic of Belarus and the States Parties concerned, study and inventory campaign to identify Muslim tangible heritage in Central Europe.
2. to organise a side-event during the World Heritage Committee session.
3. to organise an International Conference “**Muslim cultural heritage of Central Europe**”, including an **itinerant exhibition**.
4. to prepare an **upstream process**.



Outcomes & Beneficiaries

1. *Studying* the cultural heritage of the Muslim communities of Central Europe which contributes to its identification, documentation and preservation.
2. *Preservation* and popularization of the cultural heritage of the Muslim communities of Central Europe, which have gone their development from the 14th century to the present
3. *Reinforced capacity building* on cultural heritage identification, preservation and promotion, including “upstream process” within the World Heritage Convention.

The outcomes of the project will mainly benefit scientific researchers, as well as directly to religious communities. In addition, the results of the study will be actively used to strengthen inter-religious dialogue, both in the Central European region and throughout the world.



Budget

An estimated extra-budgetary funding of **USD 150 000** is foreseen for the implementation of this activity. These funds will cover human resources, high quality consultation expertise, methodological guidance, quality control and onsite training and implementation of all activities. The financial support could be provided in **three phases**:





- *USD 50 000 – Identification and Inventory activities;*
- *USD 50 000 – Advisory and Capacity-building activities;*
- *USD 50 000 – Conference.*




Donor's Visibility.

If funds are available, the project could be scheduled for a period of two years.

A communication & visibility plan will be developed in consultation with the donor(s), including (but not limited to) the options below:

Visibility Material	Collaterals	Placement	Outreach	Target audience
Dedicated webpage on the WH website	Donor's logo	World Heritage Centre website whc.unesco.org	Public	Statistics for 2019: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 18,340 000 visits • 10,735 000 unique visitors • 4, 1650 00 pages viewed
Promotional and communication campaign on social media	Donor's logo	UNESCO networks: Twitter Facebook Instagram Google+ YouTube	Public and subscribers to UNESCO social media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4,300 000 social media subscribers • 5.800.000 impressions per month Statistics 2019 : <ul style="list-style-type: none">  : 3,64M followers  : 551,130 followers  : 83,841 subscribers  : 1,271 453 subscribers

News and event article(s) in focus on UNESCO and World Heritage Centre website	Donor's logo	World Heritage Centre's website: whc.unesco.org	Public interest in world heritage issues	Statistics for 2016: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 13,340 000 visits • 9,735 000 unique visitors • 4, 1650 00 pages viewed • 111, 343 members
	Donor's logo	UNESCO website: www.unesco.org	Public interested in UNESCO mandate	Statistics for June 2018 to June 2019 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 38, 379 764 visits • 26, 763 513 pages viewed
Possible side-event at World Heritage Committee	Donor's logo	World Heritage Committee - Official Launch and promotion campaign	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committee members • State Parties • Observers • NGOs • Site Managers • World media present 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Around 2,000 participants from 193 countries •  5963 media coverage recorded during the 41COM • More than 2000 live connections on YouTube
Article in paper review	Donor's logo	The World Heritage Review and/or World Heritage Series	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More than 20 000 subscribers



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