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## **EPLO stands by the request to UNESCO for Odessa to become World Heritage Site**

The EPLO, in its broad spectrum of activities, promotes worldwide the European values, the rule of law, human rights, modern governance patterns and is currently putting a lot of emphasis on promoting good practice on climate mitigation and adaptation/resilience and on the protection of our cultural and natural heritage, also through its Circular Economy and Climate Change Institute.

In this context the EPLO promotes the legitimate request of Ukraine for the old historic city of Odessa to be included in the list of World Heritage Sites in danger. It is well-known that the City of Odessa is facing great threats because of the war and of the climate change crisis.

The historic center of Odessa is currently under threat in its entirety, but also as regards to the emblematic monuments which deserve individual protection on their own. The war can lead to irreparable damage which has to be avoided. In this context we would strongly recommend that the historic center of Odessa is immediately included in the World Heritage List. This was done last year for Rosia Montana in Romania, and also in 2006 for the Medieval Monuments in Kosovo (4 religious sites belonging to the Serbian Orthodox Church).

It is more than obvious that the historic center of Odessa deserves, as a matter of urgency, to be designated as a World Heritage Site. In terms of semantics, this will convey a strong political, but also cultural message in these difficult times where we need to preserve our history and universal roots, our cultural heritage and protect the unique cultural identity of the city which was always a crossroad of civilizations.

EPLO, as an International Organization is ready to promote this legitimate request of Ukraine and of the city standing by it, and willing to provide any support might be needed.

The EPLO has started developing its activities through an office established there.