



EUROPEAN CENTRE

FOR BYZANTINE AND POST-BYZANTINE MONUMENTS

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PRESS RELEASE

DELEGATION OF E.K.B.M.M. TO NORTH MACEDONIA

On Thursday, April 10, 2025, following the invitation from the Institute of Monuments and Museums of Prilep, a delegation of E.K.B.M.M. visited North Macedonia. The delegation included members of the Administrative Board: Mr. Th. Vlachoulis, Head of the Directorate of the Restoration of Byzantine and Post-Byzantine Monuments, Ministry of Culture, Ms. I. Papageorgiou, Deputy Head of Directorate of Byzantine and Post-Byzantine Antiquities, Ministry of Culture, Mr. A. Tantsis, Associate Professor of Byzantine Archaeology at Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, and Ms. F. Karagianni, Director of E.K.B.M.M. The visit aimed to foster collaboration between the two parties on the restoration project for the katholikon of the Byzantine Monastery of the Dormition of the Theotokos in Treskavac.

The Monastery of the Dormition of the Theotokos in Treskavac is one of the most significant surviving Byzantine monuments in North Macedonia. It was constructed during the 12th–13th centuries and rebuilt by the Serbian kings, Stefan Milutin and Stefan Dušan, in the 14th century. The monastery preserves fresco decorations from various historical periods (14th, 15th, 17th, and 19th centuries). During its latest phase in the 19th century, a fresco above the main entrance depicted Emperor Andronikos II Palaiologos with his son and successor, Michael IX, replicating an earlier fresco from the early 14th century. Currently, the monument faces structural issues and damage caused by rising moisture, which affects its interior walls and frescoes.

E.K.B.M.M. committed to supporting the Institute's efforts by providing extensive expertise from Greece's Ministry of Culture in restoring and conserving Byzantine monuments. This collaboration is part of a broader Memorandum signed in 2021 by E.K.B.M.M.'s President, Professor Natalia Poulou, and North Macedonia's Minister of Culture, Irena Stefoska. The first outcome of this partnership was the restoration of frescoes in the Church of St. George in Kurbinovo (12th century), funded by the Greek Ministry of Culture and successfully completed in 2024.

The collaboration of the restoration of Treskavac Monastery began with this on-site visit and inspection. During this visit, a meeting was held with North Macedonia's Minister of Culture, Mr. Zoran Ljutkov, who expressed gratitude to E.K.B.M.M.'s representatives for accepting the invitation to collaborate and pledged full support for this endeavor. An extensive working meeting followed, attended by Prilep's Mayor, Mr. Borce Jovceski, Institute Director, Ms. Mimoza Hristoska, her team overseeing the project, and Greece's Ambassador to Skopje, Ms. Sofia Filippidou.

During this working meeting, both sides reaffirmed their productive cooperation and mutual commitment to continue working together on preserving and restoring this important Byzantine monument.

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