

40 million euros needed to restore Greek Orthodox orphanage in Istanbul



Europa Nostra, the leading European heritage organization, and the European Investment Bank (EIB) Institute have said in a recently issued report that the restoration of the Prinkipo Greek Orthodox Orphanage in Istanbul would cost at least 40 million euros and would take four to five years to complete.

“There are many caveats and uncertainties making impossible to provide a reasonable and fair estimate of the full project costs. However, on the basis of the opinions expressed by several external experts, it is reasonable to expect the project to require a total investment of at least 40 million [euros] (a figure that, depending on many factors, could be much higher), which would generate a considerable employment during construction (likely within the range of 250-300 persons per year),” said the report released on July 29.

The Greek orphanage is considered to be the largest wooden building in Europe and the second largest in the world. The structure is located on Büyükada (Prinkipo), the largest of the Princes’ Islands off the coast of Istanbul.

The report of Europa Nostra and EIB Institute was formulated on the basis of the

outcome of a three-day mission to Turkey on May 29-31 and on a structural report produced by Clive Dawson, a structural engineer with wide experience in work on historic buildings, who visited the building in April 2019.

“As far as the site is currently abandoned to decay, an immediate preliminary intervention should be quickly designed, planned and implemented to protect the buildings from further deterioration,” said the report.

The report also said that the Istanbul-based Fener Greek Orthodox Patriarch would be responsible for raising the necessary funds for financing the main works and to carry out the implementation of the project as it is the legal owner of the site.

Spread across five stories, the orphanage has 206 rooms. The building was designed by French architect Alexandre Vallaury in 1899. The building functioned as an orphanage until its closure in 1964. Since then, it has been closed to any operation.

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