

Historic monuments in northern Greece to undergo restoration



The church of Panagia Acheiropoietos in Thessaloniki, the Palaeologan frescoes in the churches of Agia Aikaterini, Agios Nikolaos Orfanos and Profitis Ilias, the Orta mosque in Veria, the central church of Maximianoupolis in Komotini and other important monuments in northern Greece, inscribed on the UNESCO protection list, will be restored within the framework of the Cultural Routes initiative by the Ministry of Culture.

A total of 11.6 million euros will be allocated from the resources of the Recovery Fund for the creation of two of the five cultural routes. These are “In the Steps of the Apostle Paul” (2.7 million euros) and the “Egnatia Road” cultural route (7.9 million euros), which covers a large part of northern Greece.

On the pilgrimage route that follows the journey of the Apostle Paul to Macedonia and Thrace, there will be conservation works at Church of the Wisdom of God (Church of Aghia Sophia) in Thessaloniki and the restoration of the temple of Christ Pantocrator of Veria, where there are important frescoes dating to the 16th and 17th centuries. The restoration of the three-aisled basilica of Aghia Anna will take

place at the archeological site of Agios Patapios in Veria.

The 300 km-long cultural route includes the stations of the Second Apostolic Tour (Kavala, Amphipolis, Philippi, Apollonia, etc.) and the places that St Paul visited by sea (Samothrace, Athens, Kephres, Ancient Corinth, Nikopolis). The second route will include the maintenance of the Rotunda in Thessaloniki, the restoration of the Palaeologan frescoes in the churches of Aghia Aikaterini, Aghios Nikolaos Orfanos and Profitis Ilias and the restoration of the Bey Hamam baths built in 1444.

In Pella, the Byzantine castle of Moglena will be restored, while in Veria, the Orta mosque, which recently passed into the custodianship of the Ministry of Culture and is facing serious static problems, will undergo vital maintenance works.

Three sites in Kastoria have also been included in the program: restoration of the Koursoum mosque, the Byzantine church of Taxiarches of the Metropolis and the maintenance of the frescoes of I.M. Panagia Mavriotissa.

The Ministry of Culture recently gave the green light for the third cultural route “Monumental works of Cyclops and people during the Mycenaean period,” which will have at its core the Mycenaean architecture with a budget of 500,000 euros. Indicative stations of the route will be Dimini, the citadel of Gla, the vaulted tomb of “Minya” in Orchomenos, the citadels of Mycenae, Tiryns and Midea, the vaulted tombs of Messinia, and the palace of Nestor.

The other two cultural routes are “The Road to the West. From Homer to Cervantes” and “Network of castles: From Byzantium to Ottoman rule.”

The KAS has also approved the lighting study of the Temple of Aphaea on Aegina, which will be curated by Eleftheria Deko. The lighting upgrade was widely requested by the island’s institutions.

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