

ICOM

international
council
of museums

South East Europe

NEWSLETTER

2020 and
the Beginning of 2021

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FOREWORD



A scene from the New Year's event in the Knight's Hall. Robert Petan and Alenka Černelič Krošelj, premiered on 30 December 2020 on the Posavje Museum Brežice's YouTube channel (Posavski muzej Brežice).

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excited to meet the colleagues, to debate, to have a great time working and getting to know the members also as people with interesting identities. We all know that formal and informal socializing is very important and that ideas are exchanged more successfully in person.

As the Chair, I attended the online ICOM General Assembly and Advisory Board meeting on 24 July 2020 and prepared all the necessary reports from January to April. During these turbulent times, I also participated in various debates and asked members for their opinions and information. The first part of the year was intense and unexpected, but also very interesting. I hope that all the debates will have an impact on our ICOM community and a better future.

As the Chair, I also prepared a paper for the Slovenian International Museum Congress, which was initially planned to take place in September 2020 in Maribor, but was later postponed to May 2021.

The paper presents the initiative for forming the Regional Alliance in 2005 and some important and successful projects and co-operations since then. It also emphasizes the importance of the RA in the ICOM structure and the many opportunities for ICOM SEE

I'm writing my second ICOM SEE News foreword during the second even longer and scarier lockdown in our country. Museums are closed, however, most of the staff are working, some from home, others from the office, and we are all trying to do our best to achieve our goals and work on our planned activities. At the beginning of December, we put on the last exhibition of 2020, which was actually Posavje Museum Brežice's most important exhibition of the past year as it is the final part of our interdisciplinary multi-year project 'The Four Elements – Water, Fire, Earth and Air', which we had been preparing for the whole year long. Although this was not planned, the last of the four elements – Air – happened at just the right time. Nature and the air are telling us that we have to change. And we have.

Even though it seemed that we were at a standstill and waiting for a better future, the activities went on. We were optimistic most of the time, changed our focus from face-to-face to online activities and, as you can see in this issue, we were innovative, inventive and successful.

For me working in the ICOM SEE community is an honour, a challenge and an opportunity to gain new knowledge and skills, to network, to improve my professional life and also to enrich our work in the regional museum where I earn my living. Before the pandemic, I was really

countries, i.e. for experts, museums, heritage institutions and societies in this region.

The words Tanja Roženberger wrote for the ICOM SEE News 2019/20 come to mind: "The COVID-19 crisis presents a great challenge for museums, but also for the society at large to recognise the value and necessity of the existence of museums." She emphasized the important and crucial social role of museums and the necessary switch in our work, methods and communications.

At the end of 2020 we know that we are 'fighting' on many fields along with the whole world and all societies. The reports from ICOM SEE countries regarding successful adaptation to the new reality and adjustments with many innovative and inspiring programmes and communication skills and tools are an important part of this issue and I'm thankful for all the papers.

In conclusion, I'd like to repeat what I wrote in the spring of 2020: "We believe in our community, we believe in our colleagues and our loyal visitors, supporters and users." Many thanks to all of you for the valuable work you have done during the past year. We continue our 2019–2022 mandate in 'new times', but we know we will all go forward together.

All the best,

ALENKA ČERNELIČ KROŠELJ, ICOM SEE CHAIR

In 2020, ICOM SEE held two official board meetings where the majority of members were present. The rest of regular activities were coordinated in working groups and members were also informed by email. All the activities were organized and executed online due to the coronavirus situation in all ICOM SEE countries

Alenka Černelič Krošelj (Chair since October 2019) administrated meetings with the help of Andreja Matijevc, programme co-ordinator at the Posavje Museum Brežice, Slovenia, and the Posavje Museum Brežice provided all the necessary tools for the meetings. During the first few months of 2020, we were still optimistic about being able to organize and hold a meeting in Bucharest, Romania. In April, however, we decided that a face-to-face meeting could not be held and the situation remained unchanged for the rest of the year.

The Chair sent regular e-mails to members with information about important agendas in ICOM and also in ICOM SEE countries. The e-mail communication was frequent throughout 2020.

1.1 BOARD MEETING, 19 MAY 2020, ONLINE

The members held an online meeting and discussed the topics according to the adopted agenda.

The Chair presented the ICOM SEE News 2019/20 issue, thanked the members for their help and understanding and explained the reasons for the delay in publishing it.

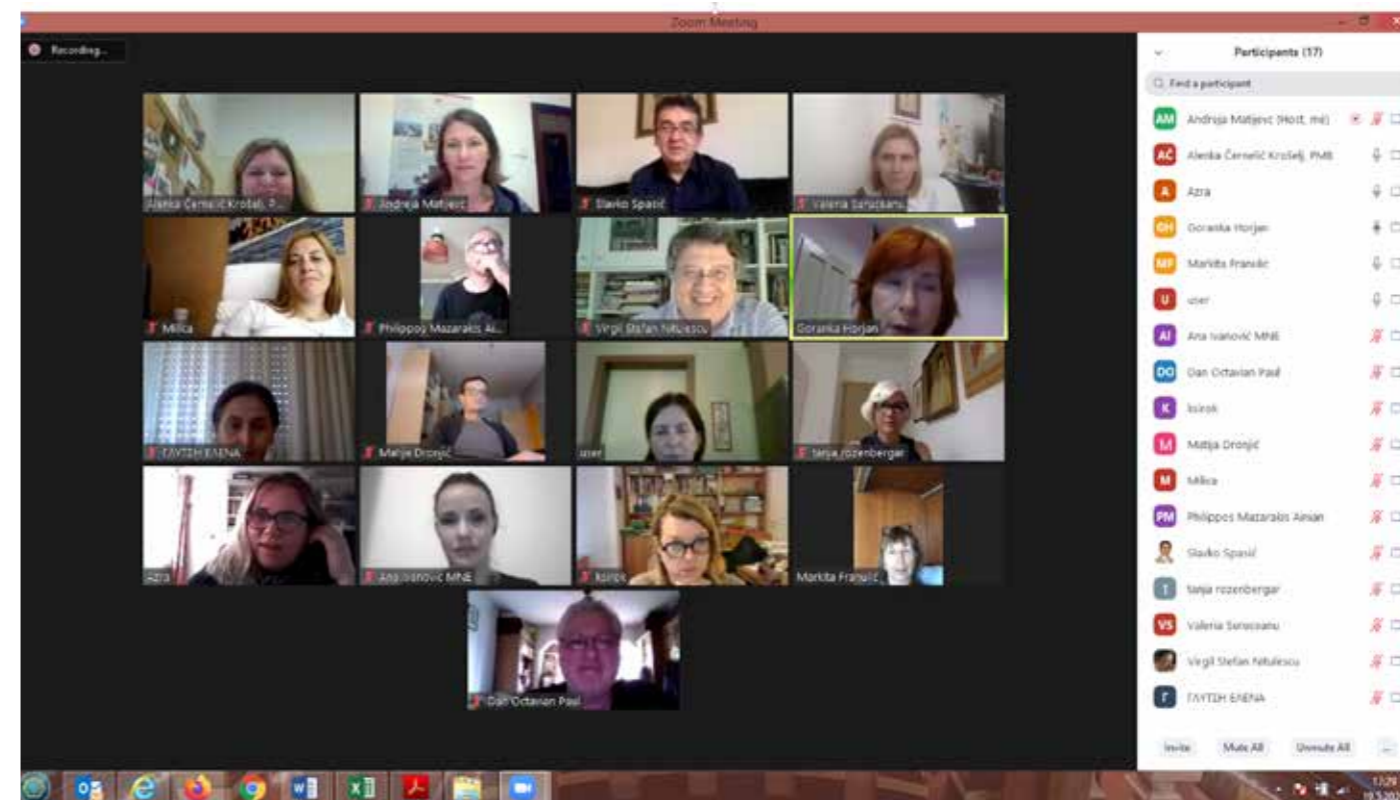
The Chair welcomed the new members from Greece that had joined the Board in 2019 and attended the meeting for the first time. The new Board Members, Greece representatives Philippos Mazarakis Ainian and Elena Glytsi, briefly introduced themselves.

Sabina Veseli gave a short report on the consequences of the earthquakes in Albania in September and November 2019 and Goranka Horjan on the earthquake in Croatia in March 2020.

On 4 and 5 May, a webinar with ICCROM, partners from Croatia and INTERCOM was organized to discuss what action to take and how to manage disasters. An educational workshop at ICOM SEE was proposed. Following Tanja Roženbergar's question, Goranka Horjan shortly presented the ICOM SEE 'Museum Emergency Programme', which included education of experts to continue work in their countries.

The Chair presented the project 'Museums and Migrations'.

The first part of the project consists of collecting data (help is needed to disseminate the proposal to the museums) and the second part will be a joint exhibition. The Chair asked the members to send comments or suggestions concerning the project proposal via e-mail by Friday, 22 May.



Tanja Roženbergar emphasized the importance of also shaping the specific aims of ICOM SEE.

Goranka Horjan pointed out that ICOM SEE had collaborated in a similar project with ICR in past years (see ICOM News 2018).

15 Years of ICOM SEE:

The first Chair of ICOM SEE, Dr. Mila Popović Ančević, agreed to participate – to give an interview for the ICOM News. Slavko Spasić volunteered to do the interview and take photos.

The Chair asked the members to propose other names – important members from the beginning to the present – to be interviewed for the ICOM SEE News as part of the celebration.

The Chair invited members to join the next-day webinar 'Museum blisters or how to prevent wasting resources in difficult times!' to discuss the issues that trouble museum leaders in South East Europe ICOM SEE and INTERCOM. Goranka Horjan briefly presented the webinar programme.

Following Alenka Černelič Krošelj's call, members (Azra Bečević Šarenkapa, Vergil Stefan Nitulescu, Philippos Mazarakis Ainian, Valeria Suruceanu, Ana Ivanović, Sabina Veseli, Slavko Spasić, Milica Cicmil, Markita Franulić) presented how the IMD was celebrated in their countries and how the museums are coping with the situation and measures against COVID-19.

ICOM SEE 6 1.2 BOARD MEETING, 26 NOVEMBER 2020

The ICOM SEE board meeting was held online.

Following Alenka Črnelič Krošelj's call, the members presented the situation in museums in their countries during this period.

Goranka Horjan suggested that members send short impressions on how museums from each country are dealing in 'Covid times' to be published in ICOM SEE News.

Adopted Programme of ICOM SEE for 2021:

1 Goranka Horjan presented the INTERCOM special project for a survey on leadership: what are the challenges that museum leaders face during these difficult times (a global pandemic, political influence, an economic recession, sustainability, climate change). INTERCOM is applying for the special project (funded by ICOM), and would like to have ICOM SEE as a partner. The aim is to conduct globally relevant research that is more applicable for other parts of the world, get feedback, lay down guidelines and have workshops – all of this with an interactive approach.

2 Alenka Črnelič Krošelj presented the second proposal. ICR had invited ICOM SEE to join the Annual Conference, which will take place from 6 until 12 September 2021 in Romania.



The proposed general theme of the conference is: regional museums about culture, spiritual, ethnical and political borders, revealing yesterday's truth for tomorrow.

Virgil Stefan Nitulescu agreed to act as the link between ICOM Romania, ICR and ICOM SEE. Goranka Horjan pointed out that the General Conference organisers would hold an international symposium in late August in Prague, so it was necessary to choose a later date for the conference. She agreed to a date in September.

3 The Chair suggested that ICOM SEE organizes another online conference in the first part of 2021 with some good ideas and important questions. ICOM SEE NEWS would be presented as part of the conference and the 15th anniversary would be celebrated.

4 The Chair asked the members about ICOM SEE making a promotion on the International Intangible Heritage Day (17 October). We will get in touch with the ICOM Secretariat and the Chair to organize new activities.

5 The Chair proposed to the members that ICOM SEE could be a partner or could participate in national conferences. Goranka Horjan and Tanja Roženbergar suggested making exhibition exchanges (online) and travelling virtual exhibitions.

The Chair reported about the process of replacing directors of national museums in Slovenia characterised by a political agenda and lack of any professional standards. The discussion continued by the members sharing similar experience in other countries.



1.3. ICOM SEE DEBATE MEETING, 24 JUNE 2020, ONLINE

The meeting was organised due to different actions and issues that were presented and emphasized after the resignation of the ICOM Chair Suay Aksoy and other members of different boards and councils. The Chair had received several letters from different boards and initiators that she forwarded to all the members. Some of them replied by e-mail, so most of the issues and different opinions were presented as part of an open and democratic correspondence. Due to the upcoming online General Assembly (July 2020), the Chair invited members to discuss the issues in the meeting.

The members supported the Chair, who had not signed any letters without the support of the members in the period from May to June. No special decisions or conclusions were adopted.

20 May 2020

AN ICOM SEE AND INTERCOM WEBINAR TO MARK THE INTERNATIONAL MUSEUM DAY

MUSEUM BLISTERS OR HOW TO PREVENT WASTING RESOURCES IN DIFFICULT TIMES!

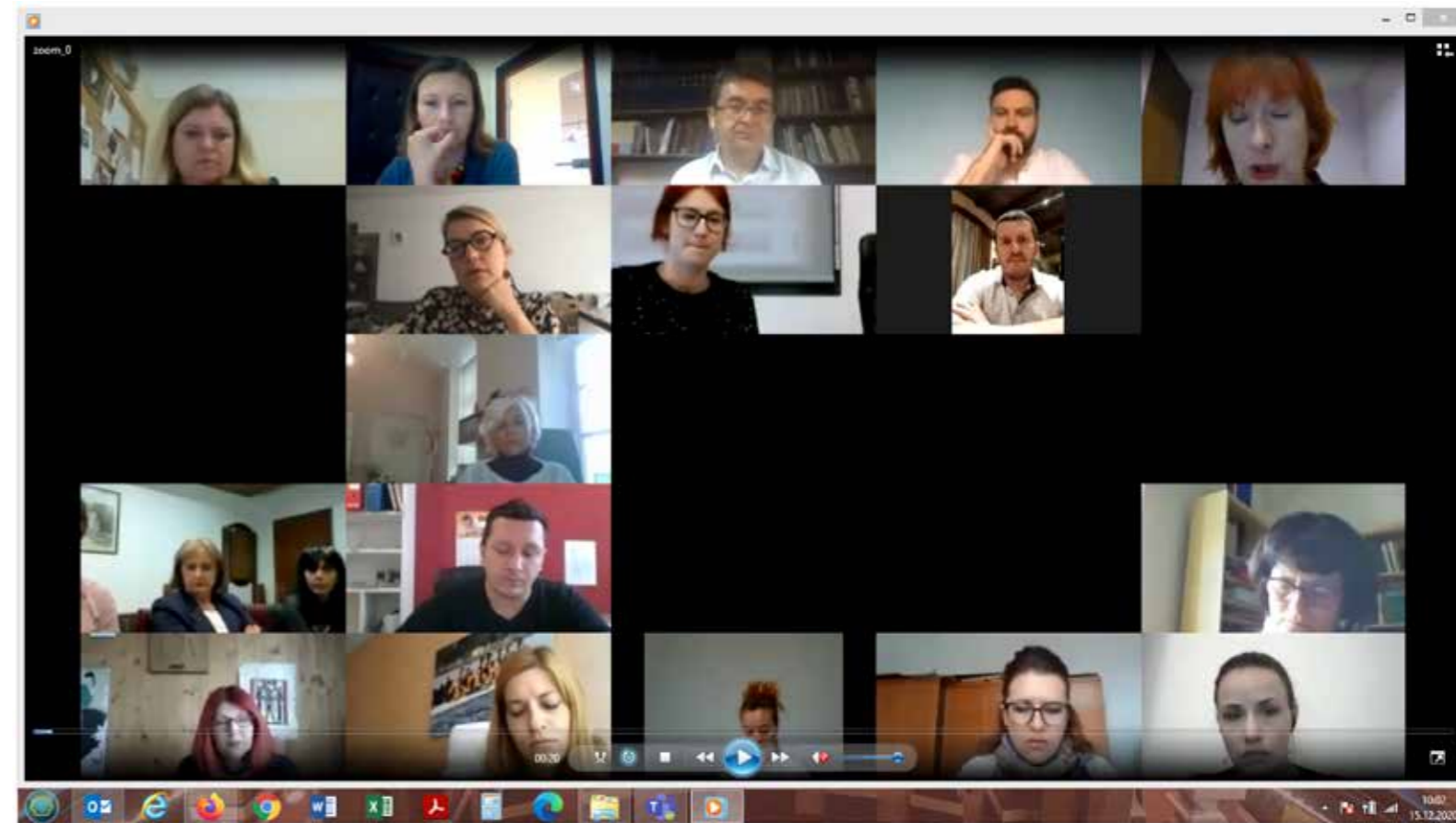
With a catchy webinar title, INTERCOM and ICOM SEE wanted to address a new kind of challenges that museums faced in 2020, the challenges that were global and long-lasting, sparing no one. Therefore, it was vital to deal with them carefully. In cooperation with national ICOM committees in the region of South East Europe, the partner committee and regional ICOM SEE alliance offered an online webinar organised on 20 May 2020 in order to mark the International Museum Day. The chosen topic was relevant in time of the pandemics. Although the International Museum Day topic for 2020, which had been selected prior to the pandemics, stressed the issues of equality, diversity and inclusion, new circumstances demanded proper responses since museums worldwide coped with difficulties in different ways, clearly showing that equality is not easy to establish when resources are in question. The webinar proved that museums met a lot of obstacles in performing their everyday duties since new measures changed the habits and behaviour of visitors, users, employees, media, etc. It became obvious that in difficult times, it is extremely important how resources are used, not only to fulfil the important social role of museums but also to ensure museums' survival. Apart from the financial cuts and a decrease in the number of visitors, which left many museums without income, administrative burdens were increasing, which was a heavy load for human and other resources and put many professionals under additional stress. Furthermore, all new measures, endless reporting and restrictions left little space for creative work. Switching online also required resources that many smaller museums lack. The investment in new technologies and employment of high-tech staff is usually not a privilege of many. In some rural parts of the world there are no proper internet connections, too. The webinar 'Museum blisters or how to prevent wasting resources in difficult times!' created an opportunity for museum professionals to discuss recent challenges and to seek for solutions. The participants were mainly museum directors and heads of departments from the region of South East Europe and ICOM SEE was eager to include all countries from the alliance. There were 55 participants from Slovenia, Croatia, Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Albania, Bulgaria, Greece, Romania, Moldova and Northern Macedonia.

A global perspective during the webinar was provided by the INTERCOM experts who reported on the recent experience from the network and pointed out the identified difficulties which exist in the region of South East Europe. The webinar was organised on the ZOOM platform.

The purpose was to increase the museums' preparedness since it is vital in any disaster management and many museums have response strategies. The COVID-19 pandemic showed how rapidly unprecedented situations can affect museum work and life in general. The webinar aimed to show how museums are backed up by their authorities in such major

crises. The selected speakers provided the audience with practical information and examples of how important it is to use museum resources wisely and what messages museums should send to their founders and decision makers in order to balance different requests.

Presenters at the webinar were Alenka Černelič Krošelj (ICOM SEE), Goranka Horjan (INTERCOM), Marek Prokupek (INTERCOM) Kaja Širok (ICOM Slovenia), Virgil Nitulescu (ICOM Romania). The presentations were followed by a lively online discussion. Technical support was provided by the Posavje Museum Brežice, Slovenia.



MUSEUMS AND MIGRATIONS: 2020 AND 2021

ICOM supported the joint project that is led by ICOM Europe. The project brings together for the first time all ICOM Regional Alliances (ICOM ARAB, ICOM LAC, CIMAO, ASPAC and ICOM SEE) with support from ICOM Portugal and ICOM Italy.

The aim of the project is to collect data on what museums have done and are doing (first year) and to have a forum for exchanging experiences and views (second year). The general approach is that migration has always been a basic human condition. With this data in hand, graphic layouts for an exhibition and a brochure will be prepared. Both will be available for consulting and downloading on the project partners' websites and other social media. Print-on-demand versions will also be possible and if museums will want to have the exhibition and/or the brochure on their premises, this will also be possible. In the second year, during the first half of 2021, an International Forum in Lisbon will be organised as part of the Portuguese presidency of the Council of the European Union.

We prepared a special online questionnaire for museums that was sent to all the members. The initial deadline was 31 August 2020, however, due to situation it was extended to March 2021.



THE RED LIST OF CULTURAL OBJECTS AT RISK – SOUTH-EASTERN EUROPE

Since 2000, ICOM has been publishing the so-called Red Lists of Cultural Objects at Risk. Red Lists, which are published in different languages and are freely available in digital format, do not represent actually stolen objects, but cultural objects which are inventoried within the collections of recognised institutions (museums, galleries etc.) and serve to illustrate the categories of objects most vulnerable to illicit traffic.

In 2020, ICOM began preparations for a new list, namely the Red List of Cultural Objects at Risk for the area of South-Eastern Europe. The list includes the following countries: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Northern Macedonia, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia and Slovenia.

A working group was previously appointed in each of the participating countries. In the first phase of the project, it was necessary to select the categories that are actually at risk and the categories that should be added, based on the following criteria:

- The objects or the site where they were found have been or are at risk of being illegally excavated,
- The objects are protected by national laws,
- The objects are in demand on the art market.

Working groups from each country sent their proposals for categories and sub-categories. The Slovenian working group prepared its proposal based on ICOM's basic preliminary Excel

sheet of categories, sources on crime related to cultural heritage / artworks (e.g. list of stolen artworks, Crime and Artwork leaflet etc.) and Rules on the Registry of Types of Heritage and Protection Guidelines (Official Gazette of RS, No. 102/10).

In the second phase, working groups were asked to prepare and submit a selection of objects to be included in the list. Each working group approached the work somewhat differently. The national working group invited museums and galleries to participate in this phase. For example: The Slovenian working group invited all Slovenian museums and galleries entered in the Register of Museums to participate in this phase. The proposition of objects with descriptions and photos was sent to ICOM at the end of the phase.

In the third phase, the working groups were asked to draft texts on international and national legislation and bilateral agreements on the protection of cultural heritage. A working meeting was also planned to take place in Paris, but has been postponed several times due to the coronavirus situation.

The result of the project will be an eight-page brochure which will include the following:

- An introductory text,
- A text about the objectives of the list,
- Categories of cultural objects at risk, illustrated with images and text,
- A text about the international and national legislation and bilateral agreements on the protection of this region's cultural heritage.

THE PANDEMIC SITUATION AND MUSEUMS IN ALBANIA

At the beginning of March, once the first Covid-19 cases had been detected in the country, the museums in Albania were immediately closed. They were reopened on the International Museum Day, 18 May. The reduction in the entrance ticket price was one of the main measures taken by the Ministry of Culture. During the lockdown, various innovative ideas about virtual attractions in museums were developed, relying also on the experience of other museums around the world.

This was the most difficult year for all museums around the world, including the museums in Albania. In this difficult situation that they suddenly found themselves in, museums tried to do their best by organizing various activities related to historical events, literary figures of different periods (Historical Museum), virtual exhibitions on social networking sites or their websites and also by using mobile apps with different archaeological and historical topics as well as exhibitions in museum halls. The exhibitions consisted mainly of authentic paintings, photos, but also of artefacts.

It should be noted that the number of museum visitors has dropped significantly since the beginning of the pandemic. The scarcity of international tourism, the limited movements of people, the closure of schools and later the restriction of their programmes led to a significant reduction in the number of museum visitors.

In this situation, the Ministry of Culture designed one of the most significant projects for 2020, namely “3D Virtual Tour: Visit Your Country from Your Home”. In the beginning, the project included only 12 National Museums and some National Archaeological Parks, very soon, however, it was expanded further. At present, it provides an opportunity to explore and enjoy not only museums and archeological sites but also churches, mosques and other places



of our cultural heritage. We are convinced that once the situation normalizes, they will once again become part of the agenda for all international and national visitors.

The “3D Virtual Tour: Visit Your Country from Your Home” has been adapted as an app for android and iPhone mobile phones. For example, everyone can use the “Apolonia of Illyria” app by downloading it in Albanian or English. The application gives a wealth of information for children and everyone else who likes to enjoy the history of this magnificent antique city.

The main museums included in this project are: National Historical Museum, Gallery of Fine Arts, Museum of Secret Surveillance: “House of Leaves”, Marubi National Photography Museum, “Gjergj Kastrioti Skenderbeu” National Museum in Kruja, Ethnographic Museum of Kruja, Onufri Museum in Berat, National Ethnographic Museum in Berat, National Museum of Medieval Art in Korça, Archeological Museum in Durres, Archeological Museum in Apolonia, Archeological Museum of Butrint and some others.

The 3D virtual tours give visitors an opportunity to travel to all the museum rooms and by clicking on an artefact, its full picture is displayed along with a small information label.

During this time, various webinars have been organized by cultural heritage specialists and museum employees. The topics have been focused mainly on



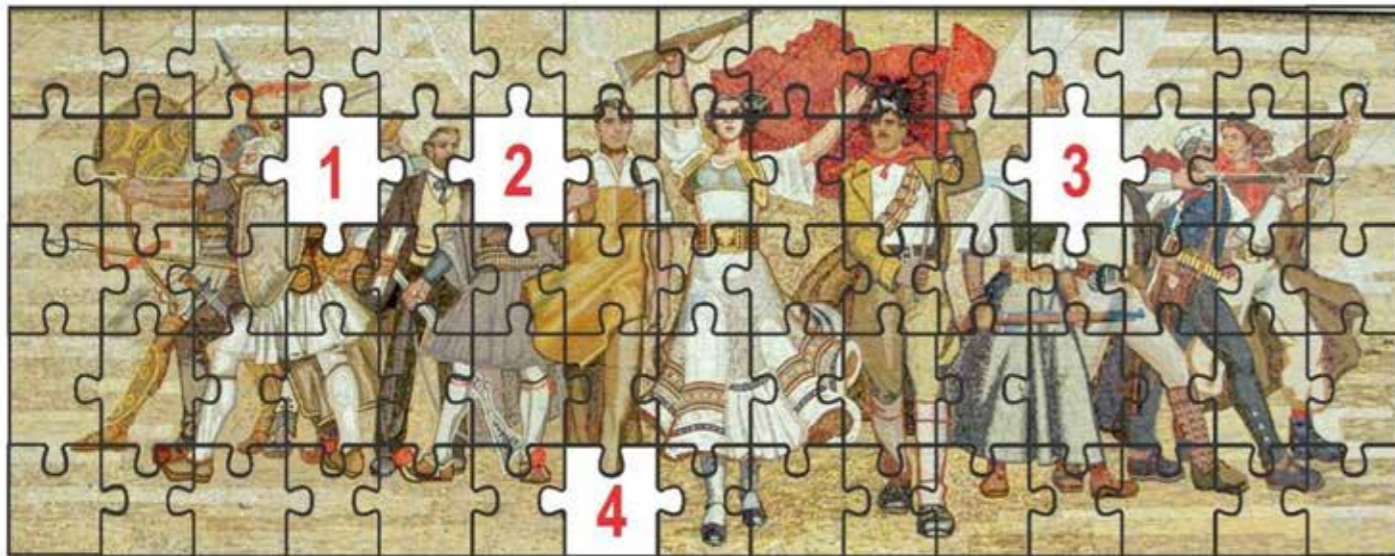
the impact of this project and the challenges to further improve museums' work, especially through other attractive virtual programmes and activities for the public.

As part of their virtual programmes, some museums have posted various videos on social networking sites such as Facebook, where speakers give a wealth of information about the museum artefacts. Other videos consist of important historical events and dates (National Historical Museum). When it comes to the Apollonia National Archaeological Park, the information has been extended even for the monuments within the park.

As part of the programme titled "Education through culture", some museums, in particular the National Historical Museum and the Apollonia National Archaeological Park, have organized different activities for public schools with the topic "touching the heritage, the museum in a suitcase".

The Museum of Secret Surveillance: "House of Leaves" sheds light on the Albanian state security under the communist regime that attempted to have total control over the bodies and souls of the people. The state security, also known as the secret police, was used to oppress the population and eliminate factions and opposition inside the communist party. As a main activity, the museum organized a series with dramatization performances related to the power of this police and the cases of fatalities suffered as a result of it. The performances were interpreted by actors of the National Theatre for a limited audience, maintaining and respecting a safe social distance.

The National Historical Museum is a leader in the organization of various activities and its topics are followed or adapted by other national museums. The museum's agenda was extensive with numerous cultural and social activities carried out from the start of the lockdown until the end of the year.



BOSNIAN-HERZEGOVINIAN MUSEUMS AMIDST THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC

In the first part of 2020, starting in March, Bosnian-Herzegovinian museums were severely hit by the restrictions placed due to COVID-19 by governments and crisis management teams across the country. With the protective measures in place, museums around Bosnia and Herzegovina set up and ran a number of digital projects and activities aimed at ensuring uninterrupted access to cultural heritage and staying in contact with their audiences. Many of these virtual events were not only followed by house-ridden arts and culture aficionados, but were also supported and promoted by the media.

Shortly after the state of emergency was declared in March, Bosnian-Herzegovinian museums realised they would be unable to carry out their projects and events the usual way, and accordingly adapted to the new circumstances by moving their programmes to virtual environments. The majority of the museum staff in Bosnia and Herzegovina could work from home, with their operations adapted to create content to be shown in digital space. A definite advantage of digital technology is that it permits museums, with their premises closed to visitors, to continue to create content, and by engaging in dialogue with the audiences and having them participate, to get people thinking about issues of importance, thus providing help to communities and society in general in rough and troubled times. On the other hand, the museum sector offered its audiences the possibility of distance participation in a range of events, devising different ways for people to experience heritage online.

In early April, in accordance with the previously presented statement and recommendations by ICOM as the global museum organisation, ICOM BiH sent a Letter of Support to ministries of culture in Bosnia and Herzegovina at all levels of administration, requesting from relevant agencies and organisations that the museum sector be necessarily involved in the programme of COVID-19 prevention measures in a manner and to the extent equal to all other sectors and activities of relevance for the public. In the letter, it also requested that financial and other forms of support to activities of Bosnian-Herzegovinian museums be provided, in light of the fact that the culture sector in Bosnia and Herzegovina, which also comprises the museum sector, was among the first to bear the consequences of the coronavirus pandemic, with the situation becoming increasingly more serious and the prohibition of gatherings, cancellation of cultural events and closure of cultural institutions. Also, ICOM BiH appealed for help with planning measures of assistance to museums, financial support scenarios and recovery of the sector, to lead to changed operating procedures during the state of emergency declared because of the coronavirus pandemic, in order to mitigate its negative impacts.

The National Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina was the museum most badly hit by the coronavirus pandemic. Given its undefined legal status and the fact that it is not subsidised, the pandemic gravely aggravated its financial situation. The first few months after the state of emergency was declared, the employees of the National Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina received salaries reduced by as much as seventy per cent. The museum was also closed to



BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA
ALMA LEKA & PROF. SARITA VUKOVIĆ, PH.D.

visitors for the first two months of the lockdown. However, even with its doors closed, it kept its operations going.

Thus, in April 2020 the National Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina prepared a number of 'specials' for its visitors, who had really missed visiting it and being in contact with it during the emergency situation caused by COVID-19. One of these specials was the Topić Challenge, published with the aim of mobilising, entertaining and educating the audience, which was based on Topić's photographs in the monograph titled *Between Two Empires*. The result was photographs of/by visitors who proved creative imitators and impersonators of Topić's protagonists, people who lived between two empires, as shown in his photographs.

It was in the second half of May that Bosnian-Herzegovinian museums began to gradually open their doors to visitors, with those in some parts of the country doing it symbolically on 18 May, the International Museum Day.

ICOM invited museums to celebrate the International Museum Day by hosting virtual events on the theme 'Museums for Equality: Diversity and Inclusion'. As for those institutions and organisations that didn't want to succumb to the pandemic and insisted on staging events in 3D space after the lockdown, ICOM proposed an alternative date, more precisely, a three-day celebration to take place between 14 November, which coincided with the European Night of Museums, and 16 November 2020, when ICOM marked its 74th anniversary.

The curatorial team of the Sarajevo Museum opened up and used digital channels of communication with its audience daily for the whole duration of the pandemic. It prepared several virtual exhibitions and made it possible for its public to see its permanent exhibition, hosted at a number of different venues (Despić House, Svrzo's House, Jewish Museum, Brusa

Bezistan and Sarajevo Museum 1878–1918), in the digital space of the museum's website, www.muzejsarajeva.ba, as well as on its Facebook and Instagram pages.

The Museum of Contemporary Art of the Republic of Srpska in Banja Luka was especially busy and maintained its level of activity fairly high, with a number of exciting events adapted to the situation brought about by the coronavirus.

Aware that modern-day communication takes place mostly on social networks and digital platforms, the MSURS moved its activities to virtual environments and used its Facebook and Instagram pages during this time as a medium to promote both its events and contemporary art in general.

The MSURS launched a digital campaign with the aim of presenting to its audience the exhibitions currently on show through special virtual tours and videos made specifically for the occasion, along with other digital materials. The campaign titled 'Our Collections in the Comfort of Your Own Homes' served to remind the audience of Banja Luka's major artists, with part of the activities also focusing on the digital editions of MSURS publications, which allowed visitors to see many Dušan Simić's monographs.

The MSURS designed its activities in line with ICOM's recommendations, after it started the campaign called #Museumsandchill, aimed at encouraging the use of social media to promote museum activities that can reach visitors in their homes. Similar to fellow members of the museum community in the region and around the world, the MSURS tried to help people relax and relieve the stress caused by isolation with its digital materials and events.

In 2020, the MSURS was one of the select few museums that received a gift from the Slovenian group New Collectivism, which comprises artists Dejan Knez, Miran Mohar, Darko Pokorn and Roman Uranjek. The new acquisition of the MSURS is a poster called 'New World Order', inspired by the ongoing coronavirus pandemic, initially presented during its first wave as an exciting art intervention in public space, which took the form of plaque on billboards and citylights.

The work resulted from the campaign and the belief that artists must also be chroniclers of time, and that design is the right way to voice one's criticism and attitudes. They sent the design of the 'New World Order' poster, complete with a certificate, to the numerous international museums they had collaborated with and whose work they appreciate.

The poster was designed in response to what is currently happening in all parts of the world, followed by a series of its virtual exhibition in metropolises such as New York, Moscow, Rome, Beijing, London, Berlin, etc.

The MSURS was the only museum in Bosnia and Herzegovina that had the honour and became part of this exciting international campaign, whose goal was to connect museums and make them more resilient through joint action against the coronavirus, which marked the year of 2020 worldwide.



SLOVENE ETHNOGRAPHIC MUSEUM AND THE ETHNOGRAPHIC MUSEUM IN ZAGREB

INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

The exhibition staged by the Slovene Ethnographic Museum in Ljubljana entitled Kjer so čebele doma (Where Bees Are at Home) was opened in its main museum in 2018, while a travelling exhibition in the Ethnographic Museum in Zagreb was planned for 2020. These two national ethnographic museums located in capital cities of neighbouring countries have been successfully co-operating for many years through exchange of exhibitions, ideas and knowledge and hence this international co-operation is only one of many. Nevertheless, the recently occurred situation resulting from the pandemic caused by the SARS-COV-2 virus and the measures provided by the national civil protection headquarters both in the Republic of Croatia and in the Republic of Slovenia made it impossible to actually stage a travelling exhibition. Consequently, the management both of the Ethnographic Museum in Zagreb and the Slovene Ethnographic Museum opted for a slightly different form of co-operation, adapted to the newly arisen opportunities, that is to the “new normal”.

The exhibition entitled Kjer so čebele doma (Where Bees Are at Home) was transferred into a virtual exhibition format and the texts have been translated into both Croatian and English and a link (www.emz.hr) was provided on the website of the Ethnographic Museum in Zagreb for the virtual exhibition of the Slovene Ethnographic Museum.

This way we staged a virtual exhibition which opened on 3rd November 2020 and could be watched through live streaming. The opening saw the participation of the director of the Ethnographic Museum in Zagreb, Goranka Horjan, the director of the Slovene Ethnographic



Museum, Tanja Roženberger, the authors of the exhibition Barbara Sosič and Bojana Rogelj Škafar (SEM), the curator of the exhibition Željka Petrović Osmak (EMZ), while the exhibition was opened by the Ambassador of the Republic of Slovenia to the Republic of Croatia, His Excellency Vojislav Šuc.

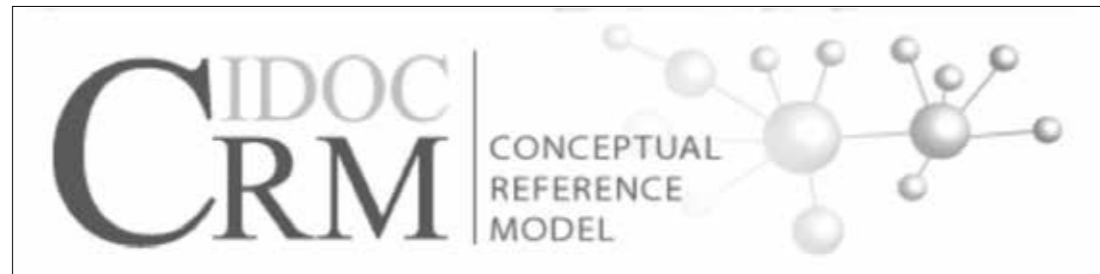
The virtual exhibition Kjer so čebele doma (Where Bees Are at Home) presents the collections of the Slovene Ethnographic Museum and provides an overview of the Slovenian beekeeping, which through painted beehives and apiaries, as well as the rich natural and cultural heritage reveal the Slovenian cultural landscape. Slovenia is home to top-quality beekeepers and autochthonous Carniolan honey bees. The virtual exhibition takes visitors on a tour through several topics: history of beekeeping in Slovenia, while listing the reputable Slovenian beekeepers, both practitioners and theorists, who have significantly contributed to the development of beekeeping both in Slovenia and beyond. Moreover, the basic characteristics and features of traditional Slovenian beekeeping, as well as a wide range of beehives are also presented. It is important to highlight the interesting painted beehives, a unique Slovenian tradition. In addition, transport of bees, different customs and beliefs linked with bees and beekeeping and contemporary topics of urban beekeeping, apitherapy and apitourism development are also introduced.

In November and December 2020, the Ethnographic Museum in Zagreb accompanied the virtual exhibition of the Slovene Ethnographic Museum Kjer so čebele doma (Where Bees Are at Home) with a large number of promotional and educational programmes. The programmes in question are focused on the topics linked with individual topics addressed by the exhibition, such as the history of beekeeping, making felted bees, traditional beekeeping, as well as lectures and workshops on how to make honey-based beauty products. The programmes are organised at the Ethnographic Museum premises, as well as online, on the museum’s website and social media.

Thus, the Slovene Ethnographic museum and the Ethnographic Museum in Zagreb have shown that museums can adapt both their programmes and their methods of work to different social situations. On this occasion, they exploited their adaptability in order to raise public awareness of the importance of beekeeping as an extraordinary branch of the economy with a long tradition, passed on from generation to generation for years. This is particularly important nowadays when we are increasingly aware that through conservation of biodiversity, social and cultural diversity we actually protect our planet and our only home.

MAIN ACTIVITIES OF ICOM GREECE, 2020

ICOM Greece is a new member of ICOM SEE, having joined after the Kyoto ICOM General Assembly, at the end of 2019.



Year 2020 was off to a dynamic start. On its premises, ICOM Greece hosted the 46th CIDOC CRM (International Committee for Documentation) and 39th FRBR CRM (Functional Requirements for Bibliographic Records) joint meeting. This highly technical but very crucial cooperation aims to capture and represent the underlying semantics of bibliographic information and to facilitate the integration, mediation, and interchange of bibliographic and museum information.

Due to the ensuing pandemic lockdown, all further ICOM Greece activity went online.

As usual, we organized and coordinated all museum initiatives related to the International Museum Day, and published the relevant information online. Instead of co-organising the celebration of the day together with one particular select museum, related to the year's theme, this time the emphasis was placed upon enhancing and promoting the digital initiatives of all museum members, as a way to react to the unprecedented circumstances.

On 14 November, the ICOM Germany Annual Conference was co-hosted by ICOM Cyprus and ICOM Greece. Originally, the event was set to happen at the Acropolis Museum, but the online version met with great success, gathering an audience of more than 500 people, on the very acute subject of "Museums Facing a Planetary Emergency". Eminent speakers from all over the world, including environmental scientists, social investigators, cultural practitioners and political activists, presented cases of how museums deal with issues such as climate change, physical catastrophes, mass tourism, the refugee and migration crisis, and of course the current health pandemic itself and examined possible future scenarios. The conference was followed by a two-day Master Class for 20 emerging museum professionals on 26–27 November.

This was also the final year for the Mu.SA Project (Museum Sector Alliance), a multilateral consortium initiative of institutions from Italy, Portugal, Greece and Belgium, funded by the EU's Erasmus+ programme.



The Mu.SA project produced a range of innovative outcomes, including European profiles of emerging job roles in museums that will serve as a common reference at European level. The final Mu.SA international conference titled "The Future of Museum Professionals in the Digital Era" was held online on 15 April. It was attended by more than 700 individuals. The following project results were presented:

- A Massive Open Online Course "Basic Digital Skills for Museum Professionals", 8-week duration, which attracted more than 5000 individual inscriptions from 50 countries, of whom 1371 completed the course successfully.
- A Mu.SA Specialization Course, 6-month duration, for 120 individuals from Greece, Italy and Portugal, combining distance and face-to-face learning, as well as work-based learning within cooperating museums.

After the end of the conference, 30 Mu.SA graduates participated in a virtual world café, in essence an open dialogue about the possibilities of a Mu.SA Community of Practice, in order to create possibilities for collaborative learning and mutual support by the use of digital information and social networks.

The last Mu.SA action before the end of the project took place on 30 April. Members of the Balkan Museum Network (BMN) followed a webinar titled "Training Museum Professionals in the Digital Era", provided by members of the consortium.



The Covid-19 pandemic made the activities and operation of the National Museum of Montenegro very difficult, however, the museum performs its basic activity in compliance with the recommendations of the competent state institutions for health protection. In the period from 16 March to 4 May, the museums' doors were closed to visitors, virtual visits, however, were possible. Thus, some museums could be visited virtually (King Nikola Museum, Njegoš Billiards Museum, Art and History Museum), while four exhibitions that were on display at the moment of museum closure were presented virtually as well, namely "Plamene zore" ("Flaming Dawns – 100 Years of the Communist Party Yugoslavia"), "Stamps from the Funds of the Court Archive", "Juta and the Land of Black Hills" and the exhibition "I bi slovo" (And There Was a Letter) on the occasion of 500 years of the printing house of Božidar Vuković from Podgorica and 525 years of the Crnojević printing house.

A film about the "Flaming Dawns" exhibition was made and presented, as was a film about the most important exhibits that are kept in the National Museum.

The National Museum of Montenegro has made several ten-minute promotional films about the King Nikola Museum, Njegoš's Museum – Biljarda and the Art Museum, which combine the art and cultural heritage of Montenegro in an innovative way. In this case, ballet is some kind of a guide through museums and guides "virtual" visitors through the settings, showing them the most important contents. Famous artists – Elena Petrichenko and Sergei Chumakov, who gained worldwide fame on stages from Washington to Moscow – lead visitors through the museums. "Music from the Montenegrin court" was used in the adaptation by Professor Radovan Papović, as were segments of various famous world classics.

All films are available on the National Museum's YouTube channel and social networking sites, and have also been broadcast on some national and local televisions.



ICOM MOLDOVA IN TIMES OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

First, we would like to present general information about the cultural sector of Moldova and in particular share ICOM Moldova's experience in the museum sector in times of pandemic.

In connection with the course on the European integration of Moldova, the plan was to align the priorities of the cultural sector with the strategies of the European Union. Due to the cultural politics of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Research of Moldova the culture should become a viable sector that will be able to have a significant impact not only on the social, but also on the economic life of our country. According to the cultural policy, the administrative system should be changed to promote a market-oriented and project-based management approach for a sustainable development of our country. One of the most important priorities of this policy is to further develop the sector of cultural heritage and museums and support local, regional and international cooperation and networking.

In 2020, the cultural sector suffered because of lockdown measures introduced across the EU to tackle the spread of coronavirus. The pandemic has affected everyone and many sectors of the economy are struggling, but the cultural sector is one of those that have been hit most badly. Performances not only in Moldova but all over Europe have been cancelled, festivals, conferences and exhibitions postponed, cinemas, theatres and museums closed, television and film productions put on hold, so many artists cannot earn a living. Moldova is a small country with a poor economy. And, of course, we were not at all prepared for this long worldwide health crisis. The Ministry of Education, Culture and Research did everything in its power to support the cultural sector, but the specificity of the cultural sector makes it harder for its workers to qualify for support. There are many individual artists, small businesses and charities.



The activity of cultural institutions in the Republic of Moldova was considerably reduced and, of course, the sector suffered big problems. In relation to ICOM Moldova, it should also be noted that the legal mandate of ICOM Moldova implies development of a national policy for heritage, capacity building of the heritage sector stakeholders for a sustainable cultural and economic development, promotion of the regional co-operation and exchange of experience within the Eastern Partnership region and between the EU countries.

The pandemic certainly had a negative impact on the offline activities of our cultural organisations. Nevertheless, many foreign partners were very efficient and quickly adapted to the new conditions by offering a number of interesting online meetings and conferences. In 2020, ICOM Moldova members participated in several online meetings of the ICOM – international museum community, as well as the ICOM Regional Alliance of South-East Europe Countries. ICOM Moldova also attended several online Creative Europe meetings to discuss the future of the next stage of the programme (2021–2027).

Another thing that deserves mentioning is a successful partnership of several institutions that have mobilized their efforts to continue their previously planned joint activities in an online format, such as the successful cooperation of ICOM Moldova with the Chisinau City History Museum for a joint promotion of the cultural heritage of the Republic of Moldova.

Several joint online events were organized, namely memorial exhibitions, discussions, meetings in which important artists and cultural researchers took part. A particularly notable collaboration took place within the scientific research project supported by the Ministry of Education, Culture and Research of Moldova “The culture of promoting the image of the cities of the Republic of Moldova through the arts and mythopoetic approach” (2020–2024).

As part of the museum’s activities, several national online competitions in the field of literature, art and history were organized with the participation of students of educational institutions. Master classes on artistic practices were held by professors and artists at the Faculty of Fine Arts of the State Pedagogical University Ion Creanga. During the pandemic, ICOM Moldova established partnerships with the Section of Humanitarian, Social, Economic Sciences and Arts of the Academy of Sciences of Moldova.

In 2020, ICOM Moldova received a grant from the Ministry of Education, Culture and Research with the main objective to improve the existing situation on the evidence system and communication tools between the local museums in Moldova through the elaboration of a unified digital register of museum collections. We started our project in the midst of a pandemic online and now we are at the final stage of its implementation. As you can see, we had several offline meetings to test the results. Next year, we are planning to organize a regional seminar with the support of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Research of Moldova with the participation of museums experts in documentation from the Eastern European region.

There have also been a number of online events organized within the platform “Culture”, implemented as part of the programme titled “Support to Confidence Building Measures”, financed by the European Union and implemented by the United Nations Development Programme. The coordinators of this project are the National Committee of ICOM Moldova, Chisinau, and the Agency for Economic, Social and Cultural Development “Paragon”, Bender. Project activities bring together experts in the field of cultural heritage, cultural managers, representatives of the civil society and public institutions, journalists and representatives of the donor community, from both banks of the river Dniester – a community divided by the Transnistrian political conflict. This cross-river specialized platform on cultural cooperation is aimed at harnessing the confidence-building potential of implemented infrastructural



projects and enhancing the cross-river collaboration between beneficiary communities from both banks of the river Nister. The project started in 2016 and the second phase is taking place during the period between 2019 and November 2021.

The most interesting initiatives implemented in our country during the pandemic are small outdoor concerts in museum courtyards and cultural sites. A very important positive moment is associated with the fact that cultural life was gradually redirected to the regions and the citizens in rural areas showed an increased interest in cultural heritage. For example, there was a successful series of classical music concerts, organised by the artists from the National Philharmonic in the Orhei Vechi cultural reservation.

When it comes to the novel coronavirus, many things have changed, including in the field of museums. We all went through a complicated period when we had to close the exhibitions and concert halls to the general public. For a while, we had to work remotely, continuing the research and valorisation of cultural heritage. We had to learn some new things, how to do activities with the public in an online format, how to promote the museum collections through social media, which was something that we didn’t have much experience with before. In the future, we have to further adapt to the new conditions and to change our vision towards new communication tools. To be successful, museums’ networking needs to be cross sectorial, for example museums need to focus on collaborating with scientific institutions, theatres, audio and visual industry, design and other creative industries.

During these times of uncertainty, we are focusing on a clear vision of what kind of organization ICOM Moldova wants to be.

We have to:

- lead the museum sector by making our work more visible,
- effectively support museum professionals in navigating the difficult challenges brought on by the pandemic,
- work on skills development
- search for additional funding and technical support,
- adapt to new business models,
- stay connected with museum professionals from all over the world.

ROMANIAN MUSEUMS DURING THE COVID PANDEMIC

By mid-March 2020, the Romanian government issued an emergency state, which had, as a direct consequence, the closure of public museums' activities for two months. Even the museums' personnel was confined at home. All the public museum spaces were closed. However, this did not mean a decrease in salaries, so the managers had to find solutions in order for the entire personnel to have something to do, which would justify the payments. This fact was particularly difficult for exhibitions' custodians for the duration of the exhibition closure to the public. In addition, the restorers – usually working directly with heritage goods – were no longer able to work directly with the objects for as long as the objects had to stay in storage and the personnel at home. Simultaneously, all the activities usually carried out in offices had to be transferred to virtual spaces, as researchers, curators and all the others were not able to come to work anymore. All the possible virtual platforms became common knowledge for everyone.



By mid-May, the confinement ended and most of the staff came back to work, but not entirely if the institutions were not able to secure social distancing in museum spaces. In June, museums were again allowed to hold public activities. Since then, excepting short periods of time when some localities were put on lockdown, the Romanian museums were able to organize public activities, provided that social distancing and all the required sanitary means were in place. However, this does not mean that the things went back to normal, because, firstly, many museums were discouraged to organize important curatorial events due to the lack of interest and money. Secondly, a general sentiment of fear kept many visitors at home. The indicator of physical visits to museums dropped to about 10% compared to the level recorded in 2019 at the same time of the year.



In counterweight to all these shortages, museums developed a wealth of online activities. Virtual tours, old video footage of exhibitions (some of them already closed for many years), digital databases offered to the public, lectures and conferences – all of these became a day-to-day public activity for most of the museums. Many of them have acquired new equipment and specialists were trained within a short period of time (in order to be able to use them).

Simultaneously, museums had to change their usual administrative behaviours, as most of the internal meetings were moved online and internal documents were sent largely by email or similar electronic means.

In conclusion, we may say that the pandemic has created a new paradigm of development, which will probably be used, in a more intense way, even after the end of the pandemic.

THE EVENT “MUSEUMS FOR 10” OPENED THE DOORS OF CULTURAL INSTITUTIONS THROUGHOUT SERBIA FOR THE SIXTH TIME FREE OF CHARGE, FROM 9 TO 15 NOVEMBER 2020

Traditionally, the largest museum initiative in Serbia, which celebrates the International Museum Day, the European Museum Night and the National Museum Week, was supposed to take place in May, but the health situation in the world and a complete closure of museums at the beginning of the year affected this event, which had to be postponed.

Although the lockdown has limited museums' ability to reach their audiences, museums in Serbia have shown great creativity and resilience using the power of social media and internet platforms. Through their activities in the digital world, museums have helped people to overcome isolation as well as possible. Therefore, a special Digital Content section was placed on the website of the Manifestation, where all the online contents of the Museum of Serbia could be found in one place.

At the same time, preparations continued for the event “Museums for 10” to take place at a different time, from 9 to 15 November 2020. In 45 cities across Serbia, almost 80 cultural institutions prepared various programmes. Admission was free. The event was held in compliance with all procedures adopted by the Government of the Republic of Serbia, which relate to the prevention and control of the infectious disease COVID-19.



The focus of the 2020 event was not on the total number of visitors but on the importance of the role of museums, whose activities helped people relax and cope with stress and thus make a significant contribution to improving the national mental health.

In order to involve the audience in a more active way, a prize-winning competition titled “Present Your Museum” was launched, inviting the audience to present their favourite museum in the form of short video content.

As part of the event, an online panel titled “Museums during the Time of the Coronavirus: Challenges and Opportunities” was held on 12 November and was broadcast live on the Facebook page of the event. The panel was attended by curators, pedagogues-educators from museums in Serbia and the region, who shared experiences about the work of museums during the Covid-19 pandemic.

The event was held under the auspices of the Ministry of Culture and Information of the Republic of Serbia, and in coordination with the National Committee of ICOM Serbia.

Crises are always inspiring and this period created an opportunity to reconsider the culture policy. Cultural institutions have done very well, but the management must be directed towards greater investment in new programme contents and digitization.

It has been proven once again that the imperative of the museums’ work and existence, in addition to the museum objects, is also represented by the audience.



FORWARD TO THE PAST (NAPREJ V PRETEKLOST) – A JOINT PROMOTIONAL CAMPAIGN OF THE SLOVENIAN MUSEUM ASSOCIATION AND THE OFFICE FOR MOVABLE CULTURAL HERITAGE AND MUSEUMS

During the COVID-19 epidemic, Slovenian museums and galleries faced new challenges. They quickly adapted to the new reality and moved their work online, where they offered rich cultural content and, last but not least, materials to help teachers and professors. Museums and galleries once again demonstrated their ability to adapt and operate online during a joint promotional campaign called Forward to the Past, organized by the Slovenian Museum Association and the Office for Movable Cultural Heritage and Museums at the National Museum of Slovenia. As part of the campaign, which took place for the first time between 17 and 23 August 2020, museums and galleries published many interesting things on their websites and social networking sites with the hashtag #naprejevpreteklost – photos and descriptions of interesting objects from museum collections, photos of interesting events, short films presenting objects, interesting information, parts of the museums / galleries, employees, online workshops, online guides, prize-winning games, etc. As cultural institutions were reopened in August, in addition to the online programme, some museums and galleries also prepared special events on their premises (guided tours, workshops, etc.). With numerous publications and events, museums and galleries have once again shown that they are interesting and safe places for learning and entertainment for young and old alike.

As part of the promotional campaign, which connected 55 museums and galleries, a joint visual identity was prepared, and the participating institutions were given personalized visual identities too. Promotional materials (posters) and a programme booklet were prepared. The campaign was also presented by various media.

In December, as we were slowly approaching the end of an extremely unusual year that museums and galleries wanted to end in a positive spirit, we





repeated the campaign between 7 and 13 December 2020. During that week, museums and galleries once again published a large number of interesting facts from their everyday lives, interesting objects from their collections, took visitors on guided online tours of exhibitions, conducted online workshops and much more. Everything was connected with holidays in Slovenia in the past – St. Nicholas Day, Christmas and New Year’s Eve. Websites and social media were once again flooded with the hashtag #naprejvpreteklost, which was accompanied by the hashtag #praznicnimuzej. This time the campaign was thematically festive and the visual identity was adapted accordingly.

This campaign reached a lot of museum lovers, so we decided to organize it twice a year, changing themes in accordance with what museums and galleries decide is important. In 2021, we will start with the hashtag #Slovenija, since this year marks 30 years of our country’s independence.



DISASTERS IN CROATIA – Earthquake, 22 March, 28–31 December

Battling with coronavirus, Croatia was also struck by two strong earthquakes, the first one on 22 March with the epicentre near Zagreb and the second, even stronger one at the end of the year with the epicentre between Petrinja and Sisak (30 km SE of Zagreb). The last earthquake resulted in seven dead people and enormous damage in towns and villages. The neighbouring countries offered help in both cases.

The first earthquake severely damaged many museums in Zagreb and the renovation and repair work is underway. Help from Slovenian museums with some materials for the storage and protection of museum objects was provided on 10 April 2020 on the border as the country borders were closed.

As the damage is enormous, the renovation process will be long-lasting and our colleagues will need help not just from ICOM SEE, but also from ICOM.



ICH DAY

ICOM SEE continued a campaign that promoted 17 October as the ICH International Day using its logo and emphasising that the initiative was started by ICOM. The response has been favourable, however, the campaign needs a bigger support to reach more active participants. The campaign is available on social networks. We will be even more active in 2021.



The proposed logo, made by Matija Dronjić, ICOM Croatia

BEING ACTIVE ONLINE

ICOM SEE puts in a lot of effort into sending information on different activities to its members. Apart from posting about the current issues on Facebook and the website, the information is also given to the chairs and representatives of national committees to allow them to reach members also through national online channels.

The website and the Facebook page were redesigned in the early 2020. The members were asked and encouraged to send information to be shared on the ICOM SEE website and Facebook page.

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