

Newsletter

Winter 2023



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Dear members,

This edition is a little tinier than usual. However, this is not so strange; the year is coming into its quiet and meditative phase, just like animals start saving energy for hibernation and plants throw away leaves and direct their powers underground.

On the other hand, right up until these festive days, I felt that the human business world has been only accelerating and was busier than ever, although it is not yet the time to boast about the results. Their time will come.

This is at least true for all who have submitted their abstracts for the IE conference 2024. Little seeds that will feed our hunger for new knowledge and ideas in March. It is already clear that many of them will provide excellent food for thought, highlight new challenges of our profession, but also show possible new directions for interpreters to tackle social and environmental sustainability. The results of the hard work of our conference organisers, in the form of another excellent programme rich with interpretive study visits, is already online though. So if you are still indecisive about your participation, you might change your mind after reading the programme and seeing the postcard from the hosting country in this edition.

Is listening a skill to be found in the competence framework for interpreters? It might sound unusual, but an article in the Thoughts section can reveal various benefits that interpreters - and even more, their participants - can benefit from. Remember that you can always contact authors to find out more if you feel inspired by their words!

Our regular section about the IE training programme is this time filled with inspiring reports from two UNESCO sites: Västra Götaland in Sweden and the Wadden Sea in the Netherlands that were venues, not for the first time (!), for the Certified Interpretive Planner and Certified Interpretive Writer training courses. Once again it proves that IE training courses can have an immediate applicability and its results find their way into management plans. I'm sure we'll hear about both locations as interpretation excellence spots in future. A module on Interpretive Hosting was organised in Zagreb in which farmers and local producers contributed to the creation of interpretive hosting services from their own background. And finally, the new generation of future IE trainers gathered in Italy, close to the highest settled Alpine altitude, surrounded by serene forests and snowy peaks. An ideal place to forget about the outside world and spend one week in intense value-based heritage interpretation training.

Colleagues in Albania suggest we remember our childhood games and find a place to play even in our much more complex world of adulthood, of modern technologies or even in the middle of war zones. Why not wipe off the dust of one of the old family games these days?

Spring will soon be here so take a deep breath and don't let fireworks and parties completely distract you from some peaceful moments.

With lots of love and good wishes for 2024 to all.

Helena Vičič
Managing Director



Interpret europe

European Association for Heritage Interpretation



Gözuar Vilin e Rii • Urte berri on • З Новим годам • *Леститра Нова Година • Bloavezh mat • Feliz/Bon any (nou)
Sretna Nova godina • Sraštný nový rok • Godt nytår • Gelukkig Nieuwjaar • Happy New Year • Head uut aastat
Hyvää uutta vuotta • Lökkich Nijjer • Bonne année • Feliz aninovo • Schönes/Frohes/Gutes neues Jahr
Guten flutsch (ins neue Jahr) • Ikaiv' xrová • Boldog új évét • Teraeit • Athbhlaic feoi Mhaise Duit
Buon anno • I aimteu jarino gadu • I aimteu naujuju meti • Alles Guitdes am neue Jner • С рехца Нова Година
Is-Sana l-Tajba • Godt nytt år • La multi ani • Buona annada • Szczęśliwego Nowego Roku • Feliz ano novo
С Новим годом • Vuore odđajagi • Buerie orrejaepie • Vuorre odđajhke • Bon'annu nou • Blædhna mihath ùe
С рехца Нова година • Sraštný nový rok • Srečno novo leto • Feliz Navidad • Gott nytt år • Mutlu yılar
З Новим роком • Blwyddyn Newydd Dda

Interpretation as an art of listening

Max Dubravko Fijacko (Croatia)

Uncovering the artistry of interpretation through a different lens – the transformative power of active listening in every exchange.

In the serene surroundings of the Krka National Park in Croatia, the workshop 'Interpretation as an art of listening' unfolded, fostering a collaborative atmosphere and shared learning experiences. Participants not only delved into the transformative power of active listening but also contributed to a collective narrative that emphasised the reciprocity between interpreters and guests.

What made this workshop distinctive was the active engagement of participants, who embraced the art of listening with openness and a readiness to accept input from their peers. The workshop served as both a learning platform and a space for co-creation, where each voice played a role in shaping a collective understanding.

Central to our discussions was the profound significance of listening in the interpretive process. The workshop emphasised that, "listening is one of the keys to understanding the emotions and ideas behind words", encouraging interpreters to go beyond mere surface-level interactions.

Bryant McGill's wisdom, "One of the sincerest forms of respect is actually listening to what another has to say", underscored the workshop's ethos of shared growth. Interpreters assumed the role of facilitators, inspiring one another to evolve and expand their perspectives through a collaborative journey.

A guiding principle emerged organically from our reflections: "If I am constantly speaking, I won't learn anything new". This acknowledgment highlighted the transformative power of creating an environment where listening takes precedence over speaking. In the realm of interpretation, genuine growth occurs when interpreters embrace the roles of facilitators and co-creators, fostering an atmosphere of mutual inspiration and shared learning.

Throughout the workshop, several brief exercises incorporated elements of active listening and the acceptance of input through exchanges and communication. These exercises provided practical experiences that reinforced the importance of these principles in a hands-on context.

The workshop also shed light on the symbiotic relationship between interpreters and guests, emphasising the importance of guests sharing their perspectives. This holistic approach fostered a reciprocal exchange of ideas, showcasing interpretation as a collaborative process, done with participants rather than for them.

As the workshop concluded, participants left with newfound insights into the interpretive process and a heightened awareness of the impact of active listening on meaningful connections and mutual growth. This transformative experience set the stage for a continuous journey of exploration and learning.

This workshop was just one among many throughout the day at the IE National Forum of Interpreters (Croatia) organised by the Croatian country team. While each workshop offered unique insights, 'Interpretation as an art of listening' was a testament to the collaborative spirit that permeated the whole National Forum, creating a rich tapestry of shared experiences and diverse perspectives.

Max Dubravko Fijacko is an IE Certified Interpretive Trainer and IE's Gastronomic Heritage Coordinator. His motto is: You aren't learning anything when you're talking. Get in exchange with Max at: dubravko.fijacko@gmail.com.



Exercising active exchange (Image: Andrijana Milisavljevic)

Can we fit three years of interpretive training in 120 minutes?

Valya Stergioti (Greece)

The results of the WH-Interp project were presented at an open webinar, available now on IE's YouTube channel.

Successful follow-up of a project means that its outcomes are disseminated, or even transferred into solid actions for the future. This is the case with the WH-Interp project.

Three years ago, under the guidance of the UNESCO Regional Bureau for Science and Culture in Europe, IE adapted its course for Certified Interpretive Planners (CIP) to meet the needs of World Heritage Sites. As a result of this collaboration, 42 managers and planners associated with World Heritage were trained on-site to explore the transformative impact interpretation can have on visitors and communities.

The collaboration of the two partners continued throughout 2023, to offer six of these participants the opportunity to develop full interpretive plans for their own World Heritage Sites, under the mentoring of Interpret Europe. These interpretive plans, following the principles of value-based heritage interpretation, referred to the following heritage sites:

- The Old bazaar of Gjirokastra, Albania
- Padua's 14th century fresco cycles, Italy
- Ta' Ħagrāt Megalithic Site, Malta
- Ġgantija Archaeological Park, Malta
- Wooden Churches of Maramureş, Romania
- Belgrade Fortress – Kalemegdan, Serbia

The interpretive plans were presented on 12 December, at an open, online webinar attended by more than 90 participants. During the webinar, the newly fledged interpretive planners discussed how value-based heritage interpretation materialised into specific solutions for their sites, as well as what were the challenges they had to face and how they overcame those.

And if the initial idea behind the WH-Interp project was that one day all World Heritage Properties could profit from value-based heritage interpretation, the webinar followed that same line. Instead of only focusing (and celebrating) the past results of a project that is being concluded, it also shed a light on the future. Sander van Dijk from the Netherlands

presented the Wadden Sea WHS and discussed how value-based heritage interpretation can play an important role in it, whereas Matteo Rosati (UNESCO) and Helena Vicić (Interpret Europe) shared their ideas about future collaboration between the two institutions.

These comments from two of the presenters sum up the Project...

The WH-Interp project was an incredibly dense and enlightening learning experience, which I feel privileged to have had the opportunity to attend. Furthermore, I honestly believe that the hybrid CIP course organised under the guidance of the UNESCO Regional Bureau for Science and Culture in Europe should be compulsory for all UNESCO sites managers, at least at European level.

Roxana-Talida Roman (Romania)

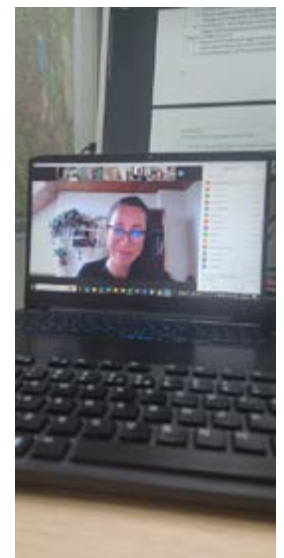
A very interesting experience, that started with doubts but finished in the most unexpected way; we developed full Interpretive Plans, meaningful for our sites and communities. The webinar organised for the occasion was a testimony of the great work we all have done together, and it felt wonderful having the possibility to share it with others.

Joli Mitrojorgji (Albania)

If you missed it, you can watch the webinar here:

https://youtu.be/_x_ZLhyaeJ0

Valya Stergioti has been IE's Training Coordinator since 2015. You can get in touch with her at: valya.stergioti@interpret-europe.net.



Webinar screenshots (Images: Daniela Ruci)

Challenge your mindset

Bettina Lehnés (Germany)
& Helena Vičič (Slovenia)

Join us for iecon24 to discuss and explore how heritage interpretation can change our mindset towards sustainability. You don't want to miss it!

Our conference team is working away to ensure that we are ready to welcome you to Slovenia for our next conference, Sustainability: Challenging mindsets through heritage interpretation, on 21-24 March 2024.

Slovenia is described as a 'green jewel in the heart of Europe', 'green heaven', 'Europe in miniature', and other similarly poetic expressions. Although it is not located in the geographical centre of the continent, it lies at the intersection of cultures: Latin, German, Slavic and Hungarian worlds. Consequently, its culture and language is a product from this melting pot of all these influences that shaped a unique cultural mixture, resulting in an enormous variety of cultural expressions and dialects in a tiny territory.

The country's former tourism slogan, 'On the sunny side of Alps', revealed its climate and geography. Whereas the current tourism slogan, 'I feel **SLOVE**nia', suggests that you will, too, fall in love with the place. But, away from this romantic poetry, Slovenia can boast about many things: vast areas (64% of its land) covered in forest and one of the most progressive forest management systems, with a fair number of European beasts that have been successfully reintroduced in nature; culinary delights, as diverse as its landscape; high responsibility and respect towards nature and traditional practices; and plenty of heritage jewels along off-the-beaten-track paths that we'll visit during study visits.

During iecon24 in March, we'll explore places that can offer the best interpretive experiences in the region. Not only in Slovenia, but also in its neighbours - Croatia and Italy.

Check out our range of interesting study visits:
<https://www.interpreteuropeconference.net/study-visits/>



Koper from the sea (Image: Interpret Europe)

Travel to and from the conference can be an opportunity to add extra inspiration by connecting further with colleagues, whilst also seeing some of the more well-known and crowded tourist spots. You may join us for an additional tour before or after the conference and joining us for a visit of the capital Ljubljana at your arrival and driving together to Venice on the way home is a good option to experience these two places. However, we'll not be staying on the usual tourist routes. Our hosts will reveal another side of the story and also talk about sustainability of the places. Find out more here:

<https://www.interpreteuropeconference.net/pre-conference-tour/>
<https://www.interpreteuropeconference.net/post-conference-tour/>

We have received a number of very promising abstracts for sessions and workshops that will open discussions at all layers of the conference theme. We will hear about local projects and research findings and discuss successful approaches as well as open questions and challenges. Together, maybe we will find some solutions.

Finally, we are extremely excited about the renowned speakers that will provoke our thoughts each day with their opening keynotes. David Uzzel, a deserving professor and researcher of heritage interpretation has dedicated his latest works to sustainability psychology and will be happy to exchange views with us regarding the potentials and limitations of heritage interpretation in fostering sustainability mindsets. Whereas Lluís Bonet from the University of Barcelona and Špela Spanžel from the Cultural Heritage Directorate Slovenia will highlight our joint endeavors from other angles.

You can find out more about our keynote speakers here:

<https://www.interpreteuropeconference.net/keynote-speakers/>

If you have submitted an abstract for a presentation, you will be hearing from the conference team during January. It is now time to start booking up your place! The early bird discount fees are available until 9 February so don't delay!

We are looking forward to meeting many of you (again) in March for the next lively Interpret Europe conference!

Bettina Lehnes is IE's Events Coordinator. You can contact her at: bettina.lehnes@interpret-europe.net.

Helena Vicic is IE's Managing Director. You can contact her at: helena.vicic@interpret-europe.net.

For all conference enquiries, you can reach the local organising team at: management@interpreteuropeconference.net.



Enjoy wandering the maze of winding alleys lined with historic architecture
(Images: Bettina Lehnes/ Interpret Europe)

Interpreting red hot chilli peppers and a donkey farm

Iva Caleta Plesa (Croatia)

Small businesses joined our training module to get inspired by heritage interpretation methods and become Interpretative Hosts!

During the last weekend in September, a group of women gathered in the small city of Ivanić Grad, about 40 minutes' drive from Zagreb, the capital of Croatia. Ana Gašparović, director of the local tourist board, a passionate tourism and heritage professional, found two farm owners willing to host us, the participants of the IE training Module for Interpretative Host.

This module is perfect for people working in tourism and the hospitality sector close to natural or cultural heritage, as it supports those who want to create meaningful connections between their products and service and heritage phenomenon. We were joined by small tourism businesses, farmers, shop owners, craftsmen, wine and cheese producers and others working with heritage, surrounded by heritage or making products and services inspired by heritage.

We started at the local farm Samo ljuto, which means 'Only spicy' where Martina and Slaven, with a little help from their two daughters, grow different sort of peppers and paprikas to make sauces, spicy, sweet and chili, and the most delicious ajvar, a sauce made of smashed grilled red bell peppers and eggplants. Perfect to match with grilled meat.

After tasting the sauces, we moved to the donkey farm Magareće mlijeko or 'Donkey Milk', where our host Neven welcomed us and showed around. Unfortunately, we didn't get to taste any donkey milk though.

The first day we spent mostly outside on the farms. We invited the owners to do some exercises with us. We were their guests and getting to know our guests and their values is important in thinking how to interpret the heritage they cherish and link it with the product they offer. The end result of their work is a product they want to sell to guests but it is the process of making it that broadens our horizons, connects us with each other and our heritage. We were all searching for deeper meaning and trying to offer different paths to it. The method of the interpretive triangle helped us to shape our thoughts and match them to the talk.

Our trainer ensured that we had different activities and worksheets to implement the four qualities of the IE training programme.

We were happy to see our hosts join in on activities and commenting afterwards that it was interesting, inspiring and useful. They expressed the wish to participate in a similar workshop or training.

Our second day of the training was spent in Zagreb, at my place in Doremiza, where we continued to work on interpretive techniques, group activities, discussions, constructive peer evaluation and exchange of ideas.

Each of us brought some home-made product on which we had to make an interpretive talk and text.

During these two days discussing and sharing experiences, we learned from each other and the heritage we brought with us. We let heritage connect us, embrace us and make us more mindful to each other. And we had so much fun in doing it! I was happy to host another IE trainer and heritage interpretation fellows in my home in Zagreb. 'Til we interpret again!

Special thanks to:

Tourist Board City of Ivanić Grad

<https://www.tz-ig.com/>

OPG Magareće mlijeko <https://magare.hr/>

OPG Samo ljuto <https://opgbarisec.hr/>

Ivana Jagić Boljat for organising

Janja Sivec for delivering the training

Iva Caleta Plesa is a tourist guide for Zagreb, a French and Russian language teacher, museologist and heritage interpreter. She is an IE Certified Interpretive Guide and Certified Trainer. Together with her husband, she runs Doremiza (www.doremiza.com), a small creative space for workshops, photo sessions, lectures and meetings. She can be contacted at: ivacaleta@gmail.com.



Participants on the farm (Image: Iva Silla)

The first swedish CIW course – a really creative one

Lennart Spetz (Sweden)

Nine interpreters met amongst canal locks, elk, locomotives and Saab cars to be creative in the making of CIW signs and audio guides.

In September an IE Certified Interpretive Writer (CIW) course was held in Trollhättan in western Sweden. Participants from the region of Västra Götaland were the hosts and a number different locations were available to us for the course. Most prominent were the Trollhätte canal with a number of old and newer locks, the museum of the car manufacturer Saab, industrial workshops from the 20th century, and the geological park and natural reserve of Halleberg and Hunneberg.

This was the first CIW course to be held in Sweden. Several of the participants were from the region of Västra Götaland, with others from the middle of Sweden, Stockholm, Uppsala and Norway. Some were experienced interpreters and had taken the Certified Interpretive Guide (CIG) and Certified Interpretive Planner (CIP) courses before, and some were beginners.

A platform for good team building were short exercises of creative writing at the start of each day, and the exercises were also important for the participants to get started with more colorful and elaborate texts.

The network of locks in the Trollhätte canal and the society derived around them, became a reoccurring phenomenon for the exercises, from the first introductory work to our final signs on the fifth day. The limited amount of text and/or audio allowed was a challenge at first, but day by day the really short format awoke new ways to write in a more dense way to provoke, reveal and relate. The exercises in creative writing contributed greatly to that.

One day the course travelled to the plateau mountains of Halleberg and Hunneberg and a museum dedicated to the hunting of elk. The nature, the museum and the tent in which some work took place was a nice contrast to the city. There we also shifted focus from written signs to audio interpretation. In a short time all participants were able to produce interesting short guides.

The new knowledge will in the future be used at hiking trails in Västra Götaland, in the region of Bergslagen and in the east of Sweden and in Norway. A really creative group enjoyed a really intensive week. And a final tip for other courses: By starting a google docs presentation or document, all the exercises and the signs produced during the week can be shared within the group.

Lennart Spetz is a former archaeologist and has spent many years as a newspaper journalist and communicator. He has lately specialised in science and sustainability. He can be contacted at: lennart.spetz@gmail.com.



The subjects of interpretive writing and some of the process (Images: Thorsten Ludwig)

The Wadden Sea, an unknown gem in The Netherlands

Laila DeBruyne (Belgium), Sander van Dijk & Renate de Backere (Netherlands)

This was the setting for an IE Certified Interpretive Planner (CIP) Course.

Our experience at the Wadden Sea in three words? Windy, awe and sustainability.

It is certain that it was a special week in September. Not only because it was a very pleasant collaboration between Interpret Europe Belgium and two Dutch Interpret Europe members: the Wadden Association and the Seal Centre Pieterburen. But mainly because of the unique location.

The Wadden Sea (UNESCO World Heritage) and its tidal forces (the largest in the world) kept us spellbound. A group of 14 heritage professionals from all over Europe worked together for a whole week on an interpretive plan for the new Wadden World Heritage Center.

Stories, themes, experiences

What stories are there? What stories do we want to tell? What themes connect those different stories? How do we ensure that visitors can really connect with the place? How do we give them a meaningful experience? That was the challenge of the week.

We had a very special experience, a sense of place activity, at the beginning of the week: a mud walk on the mudflats.

“To share a mudflatwalk with participants from all over Europe who have never set a foot on the mud is an experience in itself! It needed so much explanation that we just said nothing and just... experienced. How do I walk, what is this, the smell, the views. Pure heritage interpretation to see and feel and look at the horizon. After a walk in silence, we looked for species and wondered about their adaptations so that they can live at all in these ever changing circumstances. A great experience on such a small patch of the Waddensea!” acknowledges our guide, Renate.



Creating an interpretive plan

This experience gave the group the perfect state of mind for the assignment of the week: creating an interpretive plan for the new visitor center.

We visited the old fishing port and museum, we spoke to fishermen, biologists and the managers of the new visitor center. These multi-perspective views gave us insight into the complex interests of people, animals and nature. How can people, animals and nature live in harmony and balance in this place? How can nature's assets be played out and strengthened in this place? How can we facilitate personal experiences and reflections?

Three different planning proposals were presented at the end of the week. It was a very interesting knowledge exchange, in which we were able to apply the principles of 'interpretive planning' to a real case!

Welcome in 2025

The new visitor center in Lauwersoog will open in 2025. The Wadden Experience Centre (WEC) will invite its visitors to discover what the UNESCO World Heritage Wadden Sea means to them.

“The WEC believes people are part of nature. We want to share that view with our visitors, provoke them to relate themselves to the natural heritage around them and consider what that means for their relation with the Wadden Sea and in fact, the world” says Sander.

We cordially invite you to come and discover it!



Mudflat walk (left), Visitor centre in construction and workshop participants (Images: Laila DeBruyne)

Laila De Bruyne is impact manager and community builder at Revive, a company that transforms (industrial heritage) buildings into new lively neighbourhoods. She uses interpretive planning as a way to connect and reconnect communities in and around the heritage sites. She is freelancing as a heritage consultant and is Interpret Europe's Country Coordinator Belgium. You can contact her at: Laila.debruyne@interpret-europe.net

Sander van Dijk is Head Programming & Content at Seal Centre Pieterburen & project coordinator of the Wadden Experience Centre Lauwersoog. Sander trained as a marine biologist, but pursued a career in science communication and education. For the last ten years he has worked on the content development of the Sealcentre in Pieterburen, as well as the newly developed Wadden Experience Centre in Lauwersoog. You can contact him at: sander.dijk@zeehondencentrum.nl

Renate de Backere has been involved in the protection of the Wadden Sea for 17 years. She mainly works as a trainer for promoting the Wadden Sea and educating guides, entrepreneurs, visitor centre employees and other stakeholders in learning about the natural values of this unique World Heritage Site. You can contact her at: Backere@waddenvereniging.nl



Mudflat walk impressions (Image: Laila DeBruyne)

The training of trainers

Vasilka Dimitrovska (North Macedonia) & Daniela Ruçi (Albania)

An inspiring and long-awaited Certified Interpretive Trainer (CIT) course took place in the breathtaking location of Arnoga, Italy.

This thought-provoking experience welcomed over 20 participants from 13 European countries, uniting them in the community of interpretive trainers. Organised by Vanessa Vaio, IE's Country Coordinator Italy, the course unfolded between November 21-25 and was led by trainers Valya Stergioti from Greece and Thorsten Ludwig from Germany.

Capturing the essence of the transformative three-day CIT course, followed by a two-day upgrade for Certified Interpretive Guides (CIG) course, the event was further enriched with a Certified Interpretive Writer Trainer (CIWT) upgrade for a select group of trainers.

Nestled in the embrace of the towering peaks of the Alps, the mountains themselves seemed to elevate the participants' spirits, despite the inherent humility each participant brought. The bond formed amongst the future trainers was akin to the resilient roots of the pine trees adorning the paths of Viola Valley – a testament to the universal language of the shared passion by all future interpretive trainers.

This remarkable experience was filled with opportunities to learn how to become better interpretive trainers. It included heart-fluttering exercises, insightful presentations, and the warm camaraderie of willing, friendly, and supportive fellow participants from all over Europe.

Barbara Gołębiowska, IE's Country Coordinator Poland, captured this shared experience, rarely found elsewhere:

"The atmosphere that accompanies Interpret Europe interpretation courses is something extraordinary. Nowhere, never and at any training or workshop have I experienced such joy from learning together and closeness based on a community of passions and values, while appreciating the diversity of our languages, cultures and experiences. This was a place where you can feel the value of the European community at its deepest level."



The stunning Alpine training ground
(Image: Basia Golebiowska)

The intensity of the week was palpable, from the profound insights shared during presentations to the emotional resonance of the feedback sessions that illuminated the collective journey. Against the breathtaking backdrop of the Italian Alps, participants not only honed their interpretive skills but also kindled a shared vision for a more connected and sustainable world.

The training was a sensory feast, nourishing both mind and soul. Beyond Interpret Europe's overarching goal of shaping the future of our common heritage, the programme inspired a more profound commitment to crafting a sustainable present and future. It ignited a collective desire to enhance individual contributions, stirring the very spirit of humanity.

Amidst the pristine white landscape, the course unfolded in a symphony of vibrant colours, mirroring the richness of the content. Although English wasn't the native language for any participant, it proved to be no barrier. Instead, it became a catalyst for forging strong connections, much like the sturdy pines revealing themselves along the valley trails.

Iva Silla, author of *Secret Zagreb* and already an experienced Interpret Europe Certified Interpretive Trainer, took part in the CIWT (Certified Interpretive Writers Trainer) upgrade:

"I enjoyed every step of the process. As always in the IE courses, vivid discussions and meaningful reflections were encouraged by our trainer. I have worked as a CIG trainer for years, and joining a new trainers' upgrade was a perfect chance for me to work closely with other trainers, get to know their perspectives, and understand our responsibility and the power of facilitation even better. Interpret Europe's training is skilfully crafted, and highly standardised, but every trainer has their own

personal touch, and that could be one of the most precious add-ons. Spending time with my fellow-trainees was eye-opening in many ways."

Aspiring to make a transformative impact, the upcoming cohort of Interpret Europe trainers seeks to redefine the art of heritage interpretation. Their mission is to cultivate contemplation and dialogue, fostering connections between audiences and heritage through a shared, value-driven approach. This endeavour aims to infuse fresh significance into Europe's natural, cultural, and intangible heritage, empowering all who inspire meaningful connections. It is through these direct and meaningful experiences that we collectively shape our common future.

Vasilka Dimitrovska is Interpret Europe's Country Coordinator North Macedonia. She is the director of HAEMUS – Center for Scientific Research and promotion of Culture (www.haemus.org.mk) and the owner of Storytelling Skopje (www.storytelling-skopje.com). She can be contacted at: dimitrovska@haemus.org.mk

Daniela Ruçi works as a grants coordinator for Prespa Ohrid Nature Trust (PONT). She has many years' experience as an environmental expert and previously worked as a manager for the Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) programme. Daniela is IE's Deputy Office Manager, and she can be contacted at: Daniela.ruci@interpret-europe.net



Group exercise (top) and group huddle to keep warm (Images: Sandy Colvine and Helena Vicić)

Congratulations to our newly certified members

Certified Interpretive Guides (CIG)

Felipe Abarca Pinto, Chile
Daria Adžijević, Croatia
Héctor Bustamante, Chile
Ambar Cáceres, Chile
Maria Catalan, Chile
Daniela Cid, Chile
Jose Fuentes, Chile
Carlos Gómez, Chile
Marcela Hernandez, Chile
Denis Ithurriotz, Chile
Lunna Iturra Herrera, Chile
Hrvoje Kovačić, Croatia
Matija Kulhavi, Croatia
Božica Lukšić, Croatia
Belén Fernández Manriquez Vega, Chile
Mária Michalčíková, Slovakia
Vujadin Milošević, Serbia
Milena Milošević Micić, Serbia
Patricio Morales Zamora, Chile
Gabriela Muñoz, Chile
Son Ostermann, Chile
Ivona Pavković, Croatia
Ivana Pleše, Croatia
Karlo Rek, Croatia
Fernando Retamal, Chile
Francisca Reyes, Chile
Carlos Sierra, Chile
Barbara Struys, Belgium
Ximena Velasquez, Chile
Anita Vondrak, Croatia
Kristina Zorbas, Croatia

Certified Interpretive Writers (CIW)

Sanja Kolić Pajić, Croatia
Ana Krznarić, Croatia
Andrijana Milisavljević, Croatia

Certified Interpretive Planners (CIP)

Joli Mitrojorgji, Albania
Daphne Caruana, Malta
Alenka Selčan Božič, Slovenia
Mariaelena Zammit, Malta

Upcoming courses

Would you enjoy an enriching course with like-minded people and to gain an IE certification?

See below and keep an eye on the training pages of the IE website for up to date information on the next courses and training modules available near you:

<https://interpret-europe.net/training/ie-courses/ie-training-courses/>

You can email training@interpret-europe.net for further information.

Date	Language	Location	Trainer
Certified Interpretive Guide (CIG)			
None currently planned	Keep an eye on the website		
Certified Interpretive Writer (CIW)			
08-12/01/2024	English	Draguignan, France	Thorsten Ludwig
Certified Interpretive Planner (CIP)			
None currently planned	Keep an eye on the website		
Certified Interpretive Trainer (CIT)			
None currently planned	Keep an eye on the website		

Toy stories

Dorina Xheraj Subashi & Inesa Sulaj (Albania)

Who remembers the games of their childhood, and the toys we used to play with?

Inspired by the topic of childhood and the complexity of social life today, but also witnessing that childhood can be lost for many others, we chose to address this topic in the spirit of historical reflection.

'The Toy Stories' is related with the connection of memories, feelings and experiences proposed through interpretation of heritage. As our childhood is part of our aging, the emotional feelings, memories and comparison with childhood is inevitable, but it differs in individuals. Based on emotional connection and storytelling we wanted to provoke the deeper feelings of our audience.

How many children during the war in Ukraine, who could not enjoy the games of their time, and who were in danger of their lives, recreated for themselves in the basements of their homes, or returned to the memories of their parents' games to fill the emptiness of the day?

Have we kept the games of our childhood, and how are they practiced and enjoyed by children now when technology is so prevalent in our lives? Would today's children know how to recreate memories for themselves in difficult conditions?

Through 'The Toy Stories - and the forgotten childhood', a project was supported by the Balkan Museum Network, MuZEH Lab created an exhibition wall display which tells the stories of toys and exhibits them, starting from prehistory to the 21st century. Through an engaging approach with the visitor, the exhibition and animated videos brings back elements from our intangible heritage, conveying education through emotions, participation and nostalgia. The exhibition contributes to re-using the games of the past to inspire us to be creative today and keeps memories and our heritage alive.

Dorina Xheraj Subashi and Inesa Sulaj are both founders of MuZEH Lab, a non-profit organisation and community centre located in Durrës, Albania. Dorina is IE's Country Coordinator Albania and can be contacted at: dorina.subashi@interpret-europe.net. Inesa is IE's Office Manager and can be contacted at: inesa.sulaj@interpret-europe.net.



Toy Stories display (Images: Inesa Sulaj)

Transhumance

Daniela Ruçi (Albania)

A symphony of birth, heritage, and UNESCO recognition.

In the hushed allure of December's frosty embrace, my mother's birthday unfolds as a lyrical chapter in the ancestral tale of transhumance - a saga woven into the very fabric of our family's history. With a twinkle in her eye, she recounts the mystery shrouding the details of her birth on December 9, a date intertwined with the rhythmic journey of cattle - a nomadic ballet that choreographed her arrival amidst the southern pastures of Albania that beckoned with promise.

Generations back, my grandfather and great-grandfather, both shepherds, scripted their verses in the pastoral ballet of transhumance. They were the architects of a craft that resonates through the hills, carried by the hoofbeats of cattle navigating landscapes in pursuit of greener pastures - a timeless legacy that spans across the ages.

Amidst the echoes of our family's nomadic roots, a recent revelation adds a global resonance. On 7 December 2023, the Intergovernmental Committee for the Protection of Intangible Cultural Heritage gathered in Botswana at the 18th conference and voted to include transhumance (livestock migration) in the list of intangible cultural heritage of humanity. This decision not only draws a connection between our familial narrative and a national legacy but also spotlights the profound role of transhumance in preserving natural resources.

Born eons ago, transhumance now carries the weight of a sacred duty - to uphold the delicate equilibrium of nature's symphony. It emerges as a guardian of balance, ensuring the flourishing of meadows, the well-being of herds, and the rejuvenation of the earth. Beyond a migratory practice, transhumance embodies a commitment to a harmonious relationship among people, cattle, and the fertile meadows that sustain them.

As we navigate the currents of modernity, transhumance faces challenges, yet it adapts and endures, becoming a tale of resilience - a living saga that fuses the wisdom of the past with the demands of the present.

In conclusion, my mother's December birth serves as more than a personal milestone. It symbolises a connection to a heritage of transhumance - a living, breathing ode to nature. It is a celebration of the delicate balance maintained by generations past and a call to action for those entrusted with preserving this ageless dance for the generations yet to come.

Daniela Ruçi works as a grants coordinator for Prespa Ohrid Nature Trust (PONT). She has many years' experience as an environmental expert and previously worked as a manager for the Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) programme. Daniela is IE's Deputy Office Manager, and she can be contacted at: daniela.ruci@interpret-europe.net



Livestock movement through the hills has shaped our country and our lives (Images: Daniela Ruçi)

Erasmus+ for projects and training

Consider this funding stream to support your projects - there are new calls with deadlines in February.



Erasmus+ is the EU's programme to support education, training, youth and sport in Europe, with an estimated budget of €26.2 billion.

The 2021-2027 programme places a strong focus on social inclusion, the green and digital transitions, and promoting young people's participation in democratic life.

New Erasmus+ calls are due out in the spring and so now is a good time to start getting ready to apply - either mobilising your individual projects or building strategic partnerships for innovations.

Keep an eye on the website for the new calls:
<https://erasmus-plus.ec.europa.eu/funding>

Opportunities for organisations:
<https://erasmus-plus.ec.europa.eu/opportunities/opportunities-for-organisations>

Five things you need to know about the new calls:
<https://erasmus-plus.ec.europa.eu/news/5-things-you-need-to-know-about-the-new-erasmus-call-2024>

You could also use this funding source to help organise international IE training courses in your area. If you and your organisation seek capacity building opportunities for heritage interpretation and you would like to organise an IE course in your institution, why not tap into Erasmus+ mobility grants.

Our members from Poland and Croatia have already organised a simple training project before. You can read their article here (<https://interpret-europe.net/ie-activities/2023/interpreting-our-museums/>), get inspired for something similar and don't hesitate to get in touch for further advice.

IE announcements

Call for social media coordinator

IE Office

Click, like, share – Do you like engaging on social media? IE is looking for your support!

Are you keen on developing and posting content on several social media channels? If so, and if you are also good at managing a small team and could give a few hours of your time to support IE, we are looking for you! Joining the team is also a great way for you to be informed about all the great things happening in the world of heritage interpretation and cultural tourism.

The tasks of the Social Media Coordinator entail:

- Development of IE's presence in media communication
- Communication with the IE Management, News Team and native English proofreader
- Posting and sharing announcements on heritage interpretation from other stakeholders
- Annual plans and quarterly reports

We are currently active on Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter/X and we are developing content for our YouTube channel and Wikipedia articles.

If you would like to join our team in posting, sharing and editing social media content, we would love to hear from you. Drop us a line: office@interpret-europe.net



Welcome to our new members

Institutional members

Viminacium Archaeological Park, Serbia

Business members

Tourmaps, Chile

Individual members (entry level)

Paula Aguiar, Portugal
Carlos Alves, Portugal
Juan Camilo Asprilla Valois, Colombia
Maira Ayala, Colombia
Barbara Bachiocco, Croatia
Maria Lucia Baquero Granja, Colombia
Ramiro Barbosa, Portugal
Raquel Barbosa, Portugal
Arbey Barrios Lopez, Colombia
Mayerli Benitez, Colombia
Richard Billington, Portugal
Dejan Bojanić, Croatia
Zuzana Bokorová, Slovakia
Ulf Bollack, Germany
Jasmina Bosevska, North Macedonia
Ivan Bozic Pavletic, Croatia
Henriette Brune, Germany
Nico Brunkow, Germany
Hanna Brzeska, Poland
Katarina Bučinová, Slovakia
Mihovil Budanko, Croatia
Antonia Budimir Bekan, Croatia
Nicolás Camacho Ávila, Colombia
Lucy Cañon, Colombia
Francisco Carreiro, Portugal
Deborah Carvalho, Portugal
Juan Castaing, Chile
Angelica Castañeda, Colombia
Frankly Castro Cuellar, Colombia
Isabel Clissmann, Ireland
Vitor Couto, Portugal
Gregorio Cruz, Colombia
Sandra De Sousa Bairos, Portugal
Luz Delia, Colombia
Moritz Detel, Germany
Angela Diaz, Colombia
Carolina Dores, Portugal
Daniela Drechsler, Germany
Beatriz Duarte, Portugal
Flórez Mendieta Edwin Jaír, Colombia
Vanessa Escobar Marin, Colombia
Matilde Ferreira, Portugal
Maria Ferreira Da Silva, Portugal
Tiago Fortuna, Portugal
Miguel Ángel Gaona, Colombia
Ksenija Gaspar, Croatia
Nicola Glaser, Germany
Laya Gonzales, Philippines
Lenis Gutierrez, Colombia

Individual members (entry level) (cont.)

Elena Hančinová, Slovakia
Lukas Hanke, Germany
Predrag Hedl, Croatia
Rastislav Hlaváčik, Slovakia
Luka Jakopčić, Croatia
Marko Jukic, Croatia
Klara Jüttner, Germany
Miroslav Kaliský, Slovakia
Tijana Keljalić, Croatia
Marko Klak, Croatia
Thomas Klinner, Germany
Mario Knezevic, Croatia
Jana Kolostova, Slovakia
Snjezana Kordun, Croatia
Jhon Héctor León Castañeda, Colombia
Joseph David León Farfan, Colombia
Luis Lopez, Colombia
Manuel Malva, Portugal
Natasa Mardesic, Croatia
Hugo Martins, Portugal
Yicedt Mendez, Colombia
Adalbert Mezei, Slovakia
Katrín Mielsch, Germany
Ivana Mikulić Sarić, Croatia
Janik Minister, Germany
Joli Mitrojorgji, Albania
Luis Eduardo Molano Morales, Colombia
John Fredy Mora Ariza, Colombia
Ana Moreira, Portugal
Goran Mrnjavac, Croatia
Andrea Nieves, Colombia
Stiven Oliveros, Colombia
Stanislav Ondruš, Slovakia
Javier Orduz, Colombia
Fabier Otalvaro Mosquera, Colombia
Diana Parra, Colombia
John Pastorelli, Australia
Suzana Peša, Croatia
Karine Petit, Portugal
Anna Pikuła, Poland
Aneta Pivac, Croatia
Anica Popović, Croatia
Maja Punoš Rebić, Croatia
Zoja Radić, Croatia
Ana Rajic, Croatia
Mirjam Rederlechner, Germany
Valentina Restrepo Castaño, Colombia
Fábio Rocha, Portugal
Jose Rogner, Colombia
Jairo Roncancio, Colombia
Jakov Rubinic, Croatia
Magdalena Sala, Poland
Daphne Sant Caruana, Malta
Ludivia Santos Lizcano, Colombia
Natalia Šarić, Croatia

Individual members (entry level) (cont.)

Silke Schoenwald, Germany
Monika Schwandtnerova, Slovakia
Damjan Serafimovski, North Macedonia
António Silva, Portugal
Patrícia Silva, Portugal
Aleksandra Sinobad, Croatia
Ksenija Sinobad, Croatia
Elektrina Skelin, Croatia
Angelica Sogamoso, Colombia
Lucija Spoja, Croatia
Hanna Sydorenko, Ukraine
Nenad Tisaj, Croatia
Ana Tomic, Croatia
Vladimir Torres, Colombia
Dumar Torres, Colombia
Ivan Andres Valenzuela Castañeda, Colombia
Ellen Van De Velde, Belgium
Chrisje Van Ek, Netherlands
Yuliana Vargas, Colombia
Angie Vega, Colombia
Marta Vergilio, Portugal
Danica Vitlić, Croatia
Karsten Voigt, Germany
Lena Wagner, Germany
Mariaelena Zammit, Malta
Matija Znaor, Croatia
Zenaida Zubieta Leal, Colombia

**Do you have any personal contacts who would benefit from being a part of IE?
If so, introduce them!**

Welcome to our new coordinators

Laura Time – Country Coordinator Romania



I support interdisciplinary approaches for promotion and protection of all heritage, by connecting stakeholders in workshops and events at the national level. I believe heritage interpretation is the one field that allows all arts to come together for building communities, a better society and a safer environment. It is the closest means we have to support each other and build communities in a quest to create a better society and a safer environment.

Being born in a mountain resort with a great density of listed historical monuments, I have always been fond of both nature and culture, whilst fascinated with historical buildings. During my architecture studies I developed a special interest in initiating change in sustainable preservation and restoration of the existing historical fund. After taking up my professional activity as an architect in 2006, I set up AICI Architecture Studio in 2015, whose aim is to cooperate with Romanian organisations and institutions, along with European architectural studios, so as to reactivate and preserve cultural heritage.

Since 2017 I have managed cultural projects and participated in courses and volunteering events in Romania and abroad. Being convinced of the importance of heritage interpretation and the necessity of an interdisciplinary approach, using new tools to promote the built cultural heritage, I have started working on my PhD thesis in Cultural Studies (University of Bucharest) and Analysis and Management of Cultural Heritage (IMT School For Advanced Studies Lucca).

After taking part in Interpret Europe's CIP course, I took my interests one step further and organised the first IE conference to be held in Romania (iecon23), as an attempt to bring heritage interpretation closer to architecture and better establish it at a national level. The event succeeded in connecting people, empowering them to learn from each other and show best practices in interpretation. It also meant a greater challenge to provoke people's interest in restoring the most precious traditions and values in people's hearts.

Laura can be contacted at: laura.time@interpret-europe.net

You can find out more about all of IE's coordinators and teams on the website:
<https://interpret-europe.net/our-structure-and-bodies/>

Further announcements

Upcoming events

Keep an eye on the IE website for details of international heritage interpretation events that we are aware of: <https://interpret-europe.net/ie-events-calendar/category/other-events/>

International conference on cultural heritage tourism and management

11-12 January 2024

Online - from Zurich, Switzerland

https://waset.org/cultural-heritage-tourism-and-management-conference-in-january-2024-in-zurich?utm_source=conferenceindex&utm_medium=referral&utm_campaign=listing

Transforming through co-creation: participatory heritage practices tackling urban challenges

29 January - 2 February 2024

Porto, Portugal

<https://www.fcic24.com/registration>

International Conference: Taboo in Cultural Heritage

1-2 February 2024

Amsterdam, Netherlands

<https://www.ou.nl/international-conference-taboo-in-cultural-heritage>

Museums, Co-creation and Making Change

20 February 2024

London, UK

<https://museum-id.com/museums-co-creation-and-making-change/>

IE conference 2024 - Sustainability: Challenging mindsets through heritage interpretation

21-24 March 2024

Koper, Slovenia

<https://www.interpreteuropeconference.net/>

And finally...

Thank you for your contributions.

Warm winter greetings from your IE News Team. Marie Banks (UK) – News Coordinator, supported by Anna Carlemalm (Sweden), Abby McSherry (Ireland), Elisabeth Nübel-Reidbach (Germany), and Ivana Zrilić (Croatia).

Any news, projects, thoughts or adventures in interpretation that you want to share?

Send a report and some photos to: news@interpret-europe.net.

Please consider that we like to promote best practice examples in the field of heritage interpretation and follow the guidelines for newsletter authors:

<https://interpret-europe.net/news/guidelines-for-authors/>

Deadline for contributions for the spring 2024 edition: Thursday 29 February 2024

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<https://www.facebook.com/interpreteurope>



<https://www.linkedin.com/company/1227939/>



<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCDbwylo-tJugfsKXIEI21fQ>

As a member you can also join our [closed Facebook group](#) or our Facebook country groups for more regular, informal interpretation chat.

Albania: [Interpret Europe Albania](#)

Bosnia & Herzegovina: [Interpret Europe Bosnia & Herzegovina](#)

Croatia: [Interpret Europe Croatia](#)

Greece: [Interpret Europe Greece](#)

Italy: [Interpret Europe Italy](#)

Kosovo: [Interpret Europe Kosovo](#)

North Macedonia:

[Interpret Europe North Macedonia](#)

Poland: [Interpret Europe Poland](#)

Scandinavia: [Interpret Europe Scandinavia](#)

Slovenia: [Interpret Europe Slovenia](#)

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**Empowering all who inspire meaningful connections
with Europe's natural and cultural heritage
to shape our common future**