

THE CANDIDACY OF THE SEE OF ÉGARA TO THE UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE

The See of Egara candidacy began the process of registration on the UNESCO World Heritage Tentative List on 27 March 2015, with the official presentation of the project at a mass public event staged at the See of Egara. Following approval by the Autonomous Government of Catalonia, the Historical Heritage Council meeting held in Elche, Alicante, on 26 October passed a resolution to register the Episcopal See of Egara and its pictorial decoration (5th-7th century) on the Tentative List, the initial step in order subsequently to aspire to UNESCO World Heritage status.

The World Heritage Tentative List is an inventory of properties which each Member State intends to propose for definitive World Heritage registration, a process which requires that the site must have been on the former list for at least one year. The purpose of the List is to inventory the properties so as to provide more efficient protection, along with recognition as an element of the legacy of humanity requiring protection for future generations.

The candidacy will then once again need to be evaluated and approved by the Historical Heritage Council for the process to continue. Definitive registration will require a resolution passed at the yearly meetings held by the UNESCO World Heritage Committee, in addition to a favourable report by any of the independent consultative bodies established by the World Heritage Convention (ICOMOS - UICN - ICCROM) with regard to cultural heritage, natural heritage, and the preservation and restoration of cultural property, respectively.

Terrassa City Council is currently working on the 'Horizon 2025' project, which brings together all the planned actions (scientific research, education, citizen participation, conservation) before the presentation of the final dossier.

Proposals for inclusion on the World Heritage List must be based on the potential Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property in question.

The authorship team believe that this candidacy proposal fulfils the following criteria:

II. The monumental complex of the Episcopal See of Egara and its pictorial decoration are a key element in the context of cultural transfer which occurred between the Western and Eastern Mediterranean in the 5th-7th centuries.

III. The Episcopal Seat of Ègara and its pictorial decoration provide a unique record of the meeting of two cultural traditions: Hispano-Visigothic and Byzantine.

IV. There are five reasons that make the The See of Egara and its pictorial decoration an exceptional artistic and architectural ensemble: is the best preserved episcopal complex of Christian architecture from the Visigothic period; the only complex among the ancient episcopal sees in the Mediterranean that has preserved pictorial decoration; it allows us to know what Byzantine painting was like; testimony of the reception of solutions coming from Byzantine architecture; the mural altarpiece of Sant Pere is a unique example in the framework of western Christian art.

