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Cultural Frontline: 150+ Ukrainian Museums Met in Kyiv

What defines cultural resilience in the face of war? What does culture contribute to the future of a nation? Over 150 museums from across Ukraine, alongside high-level international partners, convened in Kyiv for the OBMIN network conference: “Resilient Culture. Cultural Resilience.

Hosted at the symbolic National Museum of the History of Ukraine in the Second World War. Memorial Complex, the conference served as a defiant signal of Ukrainian endurance.

Against the backdrop of the ongoing Russian invasion, museum experts and policymakers addressed the critical intersection of heritage and national survival.

The program focused on four strategic pillars:

Culture as a Political Factor: Bridging the gap between identity and national security.

Heritage in Transition: Managing the physical and psychological legacy of war.

Unforeseen Leadership: Innovative museum management in times of crisis.

The Two-Way Street: Redefining international cooperation for long-term impact.

Organized in partnership with the Ukrainian, Polish, and German governments and supported by outstanding partners, the summit features experts from Poland, Germany, Sweden, and Lithuania.

Anastasia Bondar, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Culture of Ukraine

“Culture is often seen as something that follows recovery. But in Ukraine today it helps us understand who we are and why our culture must endure. Museums are documenting war, safeguarding heritage, and helping society process the trauma of this time. The discussions in Kyiv will contribute directly to the broader recovery agenda and ensure that culture remains at the center of Ukraine’s future”



.Piotr Łukasiewicz, Chargé d'Affaires ad interim of Poland in Ukraine:

“The conference, 'Resilient Culture: Culture Resilience' reveals that culture and heritage are more than just spaces for remembering the past. During wartime, they become pillars of state and social resilience. They provide answers to the questions of who we are and what we are fighting for. This is why international cooperation in protecting Ukraine’s heritage is important today not only for Ukraine, but for the whole of Europe.”

Dr. Natalia Moussienko, Europa Nostra Vice-President:

“The Culture Compass, recently launched by the European Commission, reminds us that culture and heritage lie at the heart of European cooperation. Through the work of Europa Nostra and the City Hub in Kyiv, as part of the European Heritage Hub, we are joining forces to advocate for the protection of Ukraine’s cultural heritage — preserving its history, celebrating its diversity, and safeguarding the shared European future it represents.”

Katarzyna Sokołowska, Director of the POLONIKA Institute

“It has taken a full-scale war, triggered by Putin’s aggression against Ukraine, to redefine our thinking about cultural heritage. To a considerable extent, the mental resilience of Ukrainian society – as of any other society – in times of crisis depends on the condition of the cultural sector, for culture is inseparable from identity. For this reason, we consistently regard our cooperation with Ukrainian partners as a refined form of development assistance, directed towards preserving the sensitive ‘infrastructure’ of culture, of which our shared European heritage forms an integral part. Caring, among other things, for the architectural jewels of which we are equally proud serves as a ‘therapeutic balm’ for the hardships of wartime reality and as a modest substitute for the normality people so deeply long for.”

Małgorzata Ławrowska-von Thadden, Chairwoman of the OBMIN Foundation, highlighted the significance of returning to the capital:

“After successful summits in Warsaw and Berlin, it is vital to gather our members on Ukrainian soil. The drive to exchange wartime experiences and define a future role for museums is overwhelming. As one Lviv gallery director told me: ‘We need drone



factories for the war. But we need culture to survive. This conference will demonstrate that culture is the indispensable foundation of Ukraine's future.”

Jaroslav Godun, Director of the Polish Institute in Kyiv:

“A month ago, the fourth anniversary of Russia's brutal invasion of Ukraine was marked. During this time, Ukraine has shown its strength on the battlefield and its resilience in surviving the winter in inhumane conditions, while Russia has consistently attempted to destroy the country's heating and electrical infrastructure. Cultural and scientific institutions play an important role in the ongoing war. Through their daily activities, these institutions demonstrate that they are an integral part of the fight to defend the country and its national identity. They are also a component of national security and the state's information resilience.”

Nataliya Pryhornytska, Foundation Remembrance, Responsibility and Future

“Culture is not a luxury in times of war – it is a pillar of resilience. It preserves memory, protects identity and affirms the right of a people to exist. In the face of Russia's war against Ukraine, it reminds us that defending culture also means defending a nation's right to exist, safeguarding its identity, and protecting the very foundations on which free societies are built.”

Maximilian Rasch, Chargé d'affaires of the Federal Republic of Germany in Ukraine:

“History reminds us that culture is never merely decorative – it is a repository of identity, memory and truth. Russia attempts to silence the authentic voice of Ukrainian culture. In this context, each conference, every digital record we make, every artifact we protect, and every new partnership becomes a bulwark against disinformation and a vital act of cultural resistance.”

The findings from this conference served as a vital contribution to the upcoming Ukraine Recovery Conference (URC 2026) to be held this June in Poland.

For more information: <https://obmin.eu/conferences.php>



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Committee
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