

Our Europe, Our Future!

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EUROPE DIRECT BASILICATA CENTRE

Newsletter in English

to spread European opportunities and initiatives,
to disseminate the respect of human rights and the awareness about the development of Europe's cultural identity and diversity,
to fight discrimination against minorities, xenophobia, intolerance and racism,
to help, with youth activities, the democratic stability and social inclusion in Europe,
develop active European citizenship and civil society by giving impetus to the training of youth leaders and youth workers working within a European dimension;
to promote European youth activities, such as exchanges, seminars, conferences, debates and training courses,
to encourage exchange of ideas, proposals, experiences and good practises at international level.

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LIFE Awards 2026: Best European Environment and Biodiversity Projects Honored



The best projects funded by the LIFE program were celebrated at the LIFE Awards 2026, the annual event that recognizes the most significant initiatives in the fields of environmental protection, biodiversity, sustainability, and the fight against climate change. The ceremony took place during EU Green Week, highlighting the achievements of projects from across Europe. The 2026 edition saw nine finalists compete for recognition in the three main categories: nature and biodiversity protection, circular economy and quality of life, and climate action. To mark the twentieth anniversary of the LIFE Awards, the Citizens' Award, chosen through an online public vote, and a Special Award were also awarded to a project that stands out for its contribution to the development of a nature-positive economy. In the Nature and Biodiversity category, the award was given to the LIFE Danube Floodplains project, which implemented restoration and management interventions in degraded and threatened floodplain habitats along the Danube. In the Circular Economy and Quality of Life category, recognition went to LIFE Turn to e-circular, an initiative developed in Slovenia to raise awareness of the circular economy applied to household electrical and electronic devices. The Climate Action award was presented to LIFE Wet-Lands4CLIMATE, which demonstrated how proper management, conservation, and regeneration of Mediterranean wetlands can effectively contribute to climate change mitigation and biodiversity protection. The Citizens' Award was awarded to Egyptian Vulture New LIFE, one of the most ambitious vulture conservation programs ever undertaken. The 2026 Special Award was awarded to LIFE Olivares Vivos, a project committed to protecting and restoring biodiversity in olive groves in Andalusia and other areas of southern Spain. The jury recognized the winning projects for their ability to generate environmental, economic, and social benefits in both the short and long term, also highlighting their innovative nature, replicability potential, and concrete contribution to European sustainability, biodiversity & climate policies.

"OceanEye" Initiative Launched for Leadership in Ocean Observation

The European Commission has officially adopted "OceanEye", a new strategic initiative designed to expand the Union's ocean observation capabilities. Systematic data collection is considered critical for ecosystem protection and for the security, defense, and growth of the blue economy, particularly in sectors such as fisheries, aquaculture, offshore energy, and maritime transport. To overcome the current fragmentation of research infrastructures, the initiative will introduce a structured governance model aimed at coordinating investments by Member States, scientific institutions, and companies. The details of this institutional architecture will be formalized in a proposal for an Ocean Act by the end of the year. The technological cornerstone of the project will be the European Digital Ocean System, a single platform that will integrate existing EU services and include the European Digital Twin Ocean. The latter, fully operational by 2030, will enable real-time predictive simulations to support public policies and businesses. At the global level, the Union will promote the creation of an international Alliance to strengthen detection in less monitored areas, such as the Arctic regions and deep-sea environments. To launch OceanEye's operational phase, the European Commission has allocated €92 million through the Horizon Europe program, divided into three strands: A) €50 million to strengthen Europe's contribution to the global ocean observation system; B) €30 million provided through the European Innovation Council (EIC) to promote the development of emerging technologies such as advanced sensors, autonomous systems, and artificial intelligence; C) €12 million earmarked for the resilience of maritime data-sharing systems. Finally, the initiative includes the launch of the New European Bauhaus Ocean laboratory to disseminate maritime data through culture and art. All participating infrastructures will be identified by a dedicated OceanEye label. To ensure the long-term sustainability of the surveys, the Commission has invited Member States and private partners to join the alliance by providing strategic resources and capabilities, including research vessels, marine drones, and undersea cables. More information on the OceanEye initiative is available at the following link: https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_26_1232ow suit.

European Commission launches the EU Housing Alliance

The European Commission has announced the launch of the European Housing Alliance, a new initiative promoted by European Commissioner for Energy and Housing Dan Jørgensen, with the aim of strengthening cooperation, exchanging experiences, and sharing good practices in the housing sector across the European Union. The initiative invites Member States, regions, cities, and European stakeholders to join a common platform that will contribute to the concrete implementation of the European Plan for Affordable Housing, presented by the Commission to address the housing crisis affecting millions of European citizens. The European Housing Alliance will serve as a central platform for collaboration between national, regional, and local governments, European institutions, and representatives of various stakeholders, including young people, tenants, and homeowners, with the aim of developing shared responses to Europe's housing challenges. According to the Commission's announcement, the Alliance will be based on several key principles: respect for the principle of subsidiarity and the benefits of multilevel governance, an open and inclusive approach based on transparent working methods, a flexible and content-oriented structure, and a combination of political cooperation and technical expertise connected to local realities. In parallel, the European Commission is also developing a pan-European Housing Investment Platform, designed to improve coordination between existing European, national, and local financial instruments and increase their overall effectiveness. The platform will not introduce new European funds, but aims to support a more efficient use of available resources, including through blended finance instruments and the strengthening of project pipelines to mobilize large-scale investments.



Safe2Eat 2026: European campaign for safer and more informed food choices

The sixth edition of Safe2Eat, the campaign promoted by the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) to help European citizens make more informed, safe, and informed food choices, is underway. Launched in 2021 by the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA), Safe2Eat continues to grow, with this year's edition involving 23 countries, confirming its position as one of Europe's leading tools for raising awareness on food safety. The information campaign represents a concrete example of how the European Union promotes prevention, information, and consumer protection by making scientific content more accessible through practical and reliable advice. The goal of Safe2Eat is to strengthen consumer trust in the European food safety system through educational content, information materials, and national initiatives, transforming complex scientific knowledge into simple and useful tools for everyday life, such as helping citizens better read labels, understand what they consume, and make safer choices. For the 2026 edition, the campaign focuses on three main areas: 1) Safe eating practices, with practical advice on labelling, storage methods, and food preparation based on the latest science; 2) Nutrition and health, with insights into a balanced diet, nutritional needs, and health; 3) Food transparency, with clear labelling information for better understanding additives, allergens, flavourings, and novel foods. In Italy, the Safe2Eat campaign focuses particularly on the risks associated with foods of non-animal origin (NOA), such as green leafy vegetables, tomatoes, berries, sprouted seeds, and vegetables often consumed raw or minimally processed. In recent years, several outbreaks of salmonellosis, listeriosis, and Escherichia coli reported in Europe have been associated with these products, highlighting the importance of proper handling and storage of plant-based foods. To prevent contamination and reduce risks, some simple daily practices are encouraged, such as thoroughly washing food and hands, separating raw and cooked foods, using clean surfaces, and storing perishable foods in the refrigerator at the correct temperature. To follow the campaign, consult available materials, and participate in the initiatives, visit EFSA's official channels at <https://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/safe2eat> and follow the hashtag #Safe2EatEU.

Festival of Opportunities: Two Panels Organized by us!

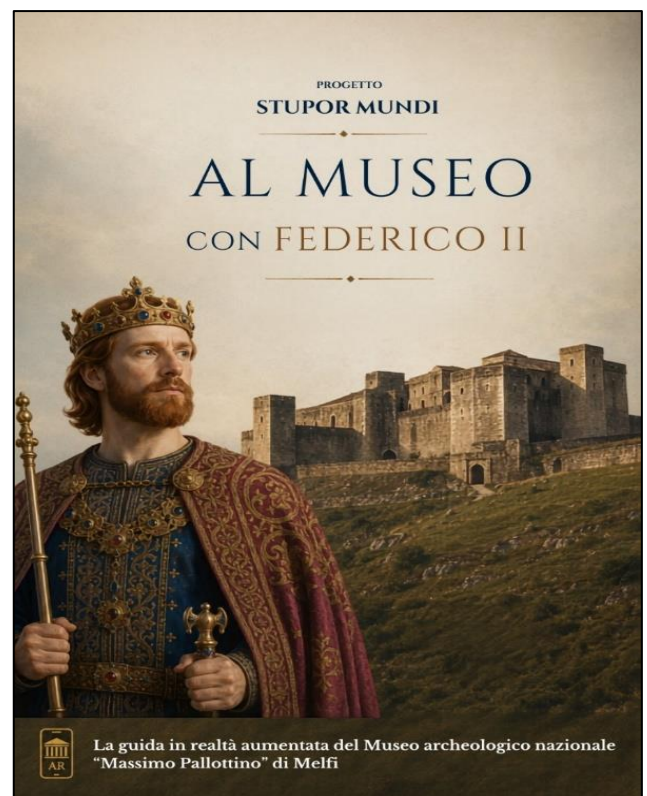


Two panels organized by the EURO-NET association were held on June 3 and 4 at the Festival of Opportunities in Potenza, as part of the 2026 annual program of the Europe Direct Basilicata centre. The festival, created to inspire, guide, and provide tools to young people from Basilicata seeking their own path, who need motivation, or who want to make their voices heard, was the ideal setting to discuss topics related to mobility for adults (on the afternoon of the 3rd) and Erasmus+ opportunities for young people (with the special participation of a Bulgarian delegation of about ten youth workers visiting the European Commission's information centre in Potenza). Europe Direct coordinated the two well-attended meetings-debates and curated a stand where informational materials were distributed. The panels also addressed crucial EU issues for the younger generations, such as digitalization, transversal skills, innovation, democratic participation, peace, etc.

Frederick II welcomes visitors to the Melfi Archaeological Museum

On May 27, 2026, the "Massimo Pallottino" National Archaeological Museum in Melfi hosted the final event of the "Stupor Mundi - Cinema and archaeology for the valorisation of the cultural heritage of Basilicata" project. The initiative, promoted by the "Quinto Orazio Flacco" State High School of Potenza in collaboration with Euro-net and Parerga Srl, involved students in an educational program dedicated to archaeology, animated cinema, and immersive technologies. During the event, the students presented the results of their work, including a paper-digital guide to the museum (see attached image), an augmented reality app, and several video animations dedicated to the main museum displays and the history of Frederick II of Swabia. The central element of the story developed by the "Stupor Mundi" project, an initiative implemented as part of the "National Cinema and Images for Schools Plan" (promoted by the Ministry of Culture). and by the Ministry of

Education and Merit), is, in fact, the figure of Frederick II, who in "cartoon" format recounts his life, his castle, and some of the most important archaeological finds now housed within the "Pallottino" Museum, housed in the Norman-Swabian Frederick II Castle of Melfi. The animations created and the technologies used in the project represent an example of how science and art can come together to enhance cultural heritage, transforming the settings of a museum of great historical importance such as the National Archaeological Museum of Melfi into a modern, immersive narrative space accessible to new generations. In fact, modern technologies are changing the way we enjoy art and culture, offering even more unique, engaging, and interactive experiences. Frederick II guides visitors through the castle with great passion and enthusiasm, recounting his story as an enlightened king. While the castle itself magically comes to life before the spectators, he displays and accurately describes some of the archaeological finds it contains. Thanks to animation technology, it is now possible to explore the Melfi Castle and the National Archaeological Museum in a completely innovative way, uncovering secrets and stories that might otherwise have remained hidden and further enhancing Basilicata's archaeological heritage. The event, which opened with institutional greetings and presentations by industry experts (including museum director Erminia La Padula and project scientific director Luigi Vitelli), also provided an opportunity, before concluding with reflections on the role of immersive technologies in enhancing Basilicata's archaeological heritage, to discuss Europe, with a lecture on the European Union by Antonino Imbesi of the Euro-net.



Screening of the short film "The Eclipse" a success

The "Ibridazioni – Dalla pellicola all'intelligenza artificiale" project (funded under the National Cinema and Images for Schools Plan promoted by MiC and MIM) concluded with a major event on May 15th at the Cineteatro Don Bosco, drawing a large audience. The event, which featured, among others, director Nicola Ragone and film editor Valeria Sapienza, featured a screening of the short film "The Eclipse," the creative work of 40 students from the G. Giorgi Professional Institute for Industry and Crafts. After completing a specific training program, they dedicated themselves to developing the film alongside a group of industry professionals, who supervised and guided every step of the process. The short film, which narrates the life and struggles of Scarlet, a girl still searching for her identity, was greatly appreciated by the audience, who highlighted their appreciation for the entire production with enthusiastic applause. The project, developed in collaboration with several companies, including Fargo Produzioni, Augustus Color, Limbo S.r.l., Smart Business Service S.r.l., and Tecnologia Robotica, included a highly detailed training program that addressed highly contemporary topics, such as the use of artificial intelligence in film production, which is now having a significant impact on the entire world of modern cinema.



The first two episodes of EUTRAIN have been released online

The first two episodes of the animated web series "EUTRAIN – Un viaggio per scoprire l'Europa" have been released, showing young people how easy it is for 18-year-old Europeans to obtain a voucher to travel by train across our continent and learn more about it, thanks to the community program DiscoverEU. The first of seven planned animations, titled "Partenze. Il coraggio di cambiare" tells the prologue to the story of Ashanti, a young black girl from Basilicata who, thanks to an event organized by the Europe Direct Basilicata center, discovers the DiscoverEU program and is able to visit Europe, finding her place in modern society and realizing her lifelong dream. The second episode, titled "Green Hope. Il quartiere green di Vauban a Friburgo", shows the young protagonist Ashanti navigating a quiet and peaceful German city, where very few cars are seen and people walk calmly or cycle. The EUTRAIN project is an initiative co-financed by the European Commission under the COMM/IT/GRANTS/2025 call for proposals. It is being developed by the Youth Europe Service association, in collaboration with the Europe Direct Basilicata center and the CDE-CNR of Tito. It also receives a small amount of financial support from the BCC Basilicata Ethics Fund. The web series is receiving a great response, both on social media and online. You can watch it on the following channels:

Internet:

- www.yespotenza.wordpress.com
- www.euro-net.eu

Facebook:

- <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61590365941308>
- <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100071680912222>

Instagram:

- <https://www.instagram.com/yes.pz/>
- <https://www.instagram.com/euronetpz/>

YouTube:

- www.youtube.com/@EURONETpz

Twitter/X:

- <https://x.com/EUROPEDIRECTBAS>

LinkedIn:

- <https://www.linkedin.com/in/euro-net-europedirect-basilicata-97382b1b/recent-activity/all/>