

Introduction to the session #275: The role of archaeology (and archaeologists) in the COVID-19 recovery plans across Europe and beyond

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Abstract – This Introduction sets out the context for Session #275 at the 28th Annual Meeting of the EAA 2022 in Budapest (31 Aug-3 Sept), which dealt with the recovery plans for archaeology after the COVID-19 pandemic. Nearly all the papers from that Session are published after this Introduction.

Titel – Einführung in die Sektion #275: Die Rolle der Archäologie (und der Archäolog:innen) in den Wiederherstellungsplänen nach der COVID-19 Pandemie in Europa und darüber hinaus

Keywords – archaeology; COVID-19; Cultural Heritage

Zusammenfassung – Im Folgenden publizieren wir fast alle Beiträge der Sektion #275 auf dem 28. Jahrestreffen des EAA 2022 in Budapest (31.8.-3.9.), die sich mit den Programmen zur Wiederherstellung der Archäologie nach der COVID-19 Pandemie in Europa beschäftigte.

Schlüsselwörter – Archäologie; COVID-19; Kulturerbe

“It is now time to get to work, to make Europe greener, more digital and more resilient”: that is the key message taken from the Statement by the EU Commission President on the finalisation of national recovery plans under Next Generation EU. The wide-ranging impacts of the pandemic crisis has affected all aspects of life, including the heritage world and archaeology: from research to conservation and protection, from outreach to training and education. This session represented a moment of reflection about the role of archaeology – and archaeologists – within the national plans for recovery and resilience, looking not only at the European Union, but also other European countries, and outside Europe. It also was an opportunity to highlight the cases where archaeology has been forgotten, discussing possible reasons for this absence.

In addition, it explored the expected impacts on the archaeological world from the implementation of these exceptional funding programs, and how archaeology can widen its horizons to help contribute to making our societies fairer, more sustainable and more resilient. As underlined in the “EAA 2021 Kiel Statement on Archaeology and Climate Change”,¹ archaeologists should explore ways to translate fundamental archaeological research into actionable science to inform decision-making, as well as monitor the implementation of recovery plans: it means new challenges, but also new opportunities.

A follow-up aim has been the idea to publish some of the contributions presented during the Annual Meeting in Budapest, the first EAA meeting in presence after the pandemic, in the German

Society for Pre- and Protohistory research journal “*Archäologische Informationen*”. Papers are divided, as well as the session was, by subject: the first part is dedicated to the Recovery plans carried on by different institutions for cultural heritage with different contributions from England, Scotland, and Italy, talking about single projects or a general overview on the measures taken by the recovery plans.

The last two papers are focused, instead, on the impacts of Covid 19 on public archaeology, on how communication approach changed during and after the pandemic, on the new skills and competences required to archaeologists for the future, and finally, to the challenges that archaeologists and archaeology must face now and then.

Notes

¹ EAA (2021). EAA 2021 Kiel Statement on Archaeology and Climate Change: <https://www.e-a-a.org/2021Statement> [14.11.2023].

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