

PRESS RELEASE

Eurobank supports the “Empress Theophano Award” Ceremony for a sixth consecutive year

Eurobank marks its sixth consecutive year of support for the internationally renowned “Empress Theophano Award” Ceremony. The event took place on Thursday, November 6, 2025, at the iconic **Rotunda** monument in Thessaloniki, in the attendance of leading figures from Greece and Europe. The Ceremony was honored by the presence of the H.E. **President of the Republic Mr. Constantine An. Tassoulas**, who granted the award.

This year's award was presented to **Europa Nostra**, that means “**Our Europe**”, in recognition of its significant contributions to promoting and defending European cultural heritage. With over six decades of activity and a presence in more than 40 countries, Europa Nostra aims to give a voice to the growing number of Europeans who support cultural and natural heritage. Through coherent actions that highlight the multiple benefits of protecting European cultural heritage for the economy, society, culture, and the environment, Europa Nostra brings together citizens and experts. The organization addresses policymakers at all levels of government — local, regional, national, and European — while maintaining close relations with the European Union, the Council of Europe, UNESCO, and other international bodies to safeguard its European identity and common values.

Short speeches were given during the Ceremony by the **Chairman of the Governing Council of the Theophano Foundation**, Mr. Stavros Andreadis and the **Chairman of the Advisory Council of the Theophano Foundation, Honorary President of the European Council and former Prime Minister of Belgium**, Mr. Herman Count Van Rompuy.

On the occasion of the award the **Europa Nostra President and internationally renowned mezzo-soprano, Mrs. Cecilia Bartoli** emphasized that the award is both an honor and a responsibility, reinforcing the organization's commitment to unity through diversity and the preservation of cultural heritage. **Executive President of Europa Nostra, Professor, Dr. Hermann Parzinger**, who received the award together with the **Secretary General of the organization, Mrs. Sneška Quaedvlieg-Mihailović**, highlighted the importance of shared heritage in promoting peace, democracy, security, and sustainability. Mrs. **Quaedvlieg-Mihailović** recalled the very motto of the European Union – “unity in diversity” (in varietate concordia) underlining that Europa Nostra continues to consistently serve the values of culture, solidarity and European unity honoring the wealth of our common heritage.

Eurobank CEO Mr. Fokion Karavias noted: *“Awarding this year's Prize to Europa Nostra highlights the fundamental role of European cultural heritage amid international turmoil and geopolitical tensions. It reminds us of the need to refocus on our shared European values, the cornerstone of our collective journey. Our European heritage is not confined to the past—it is a living source of inspiration that promotes democracy, peace, and a sustainable future. It bridges the local and the national into a cohesive European identity: our own Europa Nostra. It is our responsibility and privilege to protect this invaluable cultural heritage, which can guide us towards a more open, fair, and creative future.”*

The Award Ceremony was honored by the presence of leading European personalities and representatives of Greece's political, business, and cultural communities, among **fr. President of Finland**, Mrs Tarja Halonen, **fr. Minister of Interior of Spain**, Mrs Maria Luisa Ponzela, the **Deputy Minister of Interior, Sector of Macedonia-Thrace**, Mr. Konstantinos Gioulekas, the **Regional Governor of Central Macedonia**, Mrs. Athina Aidona, the **Mayor of Thessaloniki**, Mr. Stelios Angeloudis, the **Deputy Minister of Development**, Mr. Stavros Kalafatis, the **Deputy Minister of Labour and Social Security**, Mrs. Anna Efthymiou and the **President of the Network for Reform in Greece and Europe and fr. Commissioner for Employment and Social Affairs of the European Union**, Mrs. Anna Diamantopoulou. Eurobank was represented by Mr. **Fokion Karavias**, Chief Executive Officer along with Mr. **Konstantinos Vassiliou**, Deputy Chief Executive Officer, Mr. **Andreas Chasapis** General Manager and Assistant General Manager, Mr. **Apostolos Anthrakidis**.

The Ceremony presented by **ERT journalist Mr. Apostolos Mangiriadis**, ended with a musical tribute to seven composers from an equal number of countries, performed by fifteen musicians from nine European countries,

under the artistic supervision of the **Director of the European Union Youth Orchestra**, Mr. Marshall Marcus. The music program, framed by images and symbols that highlighted the Rotunda and elements of different European cultures, honoring the efforts and values **Europa Nostra** highlighting the diversity of European cultural heritage.

The “**Empress Theophano Award**”, established by the **Theophano Foundation** in 2019, has been presented since 2020 to individuals and organizations that promote European culture, education, and unity. Last year, the **Special Olympics** were honored. Previous winners include **European Commission President** Mrs. Ursula von der Leyen for the Erasmus student exchange program (2020); **scientists** Dr. Uğur Şahin and Dr. Özlem Türeci for developing the first vaccine against Covid – 19 (2021); **Maestro** Mr. Daniel Barenboim for his contributions to intercultural dialogue through Art (2022); and the **United Nations (UN) in the name of Secretary-General** Mr. Antonio Guterres (2023) for its contribution to world peace and international cooperation.

Eurobank continues to invest in initiatives that strengthen culture, education, and the European identity, actively contributing to the creation of a sustainable and creative future._