



EuroMed 2026  
**DIGITAL  
HERITAGE  
SUMMIT**  
LIMASSOL, CYPRUS



## DIGITAL HERITAGE SUMMIT 2026

EuroMed2026 – Limassol, Cyprus – 26–29 May 2026

*Under the Cypriot Presidency of the Council of the European Union*

### DAY 4 – Thursday 29 May 2026

## Towards a European Interdisciplinary Competence Centre to Combat Illicit Trafficking of Cultural Heritage

*Provisional Agenda*

**Master of ceremony:** Benjamin Omer, École française d'Athènes / ANCHISE Scientific Project Officer

## PROGRAMME

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09:00–09:15

### Opening

*Welcome and introduction to the day's objectives.*

**Speakers:**

- **Prof. Véronique Chankowski**, Director, École française d'Athènes (ANCHISE Coordinator)
- **Prof. Marinos Ioannides**, Director, UNESCO Chair on Digital Cultural Heritage, Cyprus University of Technology
- **[Representative of the Cyprus Presidency of the Council of the EU]**, TBC

09:15–10:15

### Act I – The Diagnosis

*Why the European response to illicit trafficking of cultural goods remains fragmented — and what we have learned from three decades of practice.*

09:15–10:15

### Conversation – Setting the Stage: Gaps, Lessons and the Path Forward

*An extended introductory conversation that lays out the structural shortcomings of the European response — legal, institutional, operational — and the lessons drawn from three decades of practice. Thomas Kline brings the perspective of art restitution litigation and landmark cases involving Cyprus; Oscar Alarcón-Jiménez presents the institutional gap analysis conducted under the Nicosia Convention; Axel Kerep contributes the operational perspective developed through ANCHISE; Monika Hagedorn-Saupe brings the perspective of museums*

and documentation. Together, they set the diagnosis on which the rest of the day is built.

**Speakers:**

- **Thomas R. Kline**, Cultural Heritage Lawyer; creator of Object ID; recipient of the Medal of the Cyprus University of Technology (in person)
- **Dr Oscar Alarcón-Jiménez**, Secretariat of the Nicosia Convention, Council of Europe (online, TBC)
- **Axel Kerep**, PARCS / ANCHISE (in person)
- **Prof. Monika Hagedorn-Saupe**, Professor in museology, University of Applied Sciences HTW Berlin (in person)

**Chair: Prof. Véronique Chankowski**, Director, École française d'Athènes

10:15–10:30

Coffee break

10:30–11:30

## Act II – Advocacy: Five Voices, One Horizon

*An unmoderated advocacy sequence: five leading European and international voices, each speaking on a defining mission of a future European Interdisciplinary Competence Centre. Marie-Véronique Leroi closes the act by drawing the threads together and calling for a centralised European solution.*

10:30–11:30

## Advocacy Sequence – Six Missions for a European Competence Centre

*Six back-to-back interventions, 10 minutes each. No moderation; speakers are introduced sequentially. Each voice articulates one of the missions that a future European Interdisciplinary Competence Centre must fulfil.*

**Speakers:**

- **Eleanor E. Fink**, Creator of Object ID – “Museums and Documentation Standards” (pre-recorded video)
- **Prof. Petros Patias**, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki / ENIGMA – “Technology and Interoperability” (online)
- **Valentina Vassalo**, The Cyprus Institute (tbc)
- **Cameron Walter**, OSCE Heritage Crime Task Force – “Law Enforcement and Capacity Building” (online)
- **Noah Charney**, ARCA – “Awareness and Training” (online)
- **Xavier Rodier**, Université de Tours / ECHOES – “Data Infrastructures” (in person)

11:30–11:40

## Bringing It Together – Towards a Centralised European Solution

*A closing intervention that draws the five voices together and articulates the case for a centralised, sustainable European solution.*

**Speakers:**

- **Marie-Véronique Leroi**, French Ministry of Culture, Vice-President of Michael Culture Association (in person)

11:40–12:55

## Act III – From Vision to Action: The Competence Centre

*The proposal for a European Interdisciplinary Competence Centre against illicit trafficking of cultural heritage — institutional anchoring, governance and the way forward.*

11:40–11:55

## Presentation – Towards the European Competence Centre

*The proposed structure: six pillars, seven missions, an evolutionary strategy. The pathway towards a Commission-funded sustainable mission anchored in the next Multiannual Financial Framework.*

**Speakers:**

- **Marco Fiore**, Michael Culture Association / ANCHISE

11:55–12:55

## High-Level Roundtable – Institutional Pathways

*Stakeholder commitment for the establishment of the Competence Centre. Discussion on institutional anchoring, governance, funding and timeline.*

**Speakers:**

- **Sneška Quaedvlieg-Mihailović**, Secretary General, Europa Nostra (online)
- **Efthymios Shaftacolos**, Department of Antiquities of Cyprus (TBC)
- **Prof. Marinos Ioannides**, UNESCO Chair on Digital Cultural Heritage
- **Marie-Véronique Leroi**, French Ministry of Culture
- **[Representative of the Cyprus Presidency of the Council of the EU]**, TBC

**Chair:** **Prof. Véronique Chankowski**, Director, École française d'Athènes

12:55–13:00

## Closing – Towards a European Interdisciplinary Competence Centre

*A final word on the day's convergence and the path ahead, followed by a brief institutional response from the host institutions.*

**Speaker:**

- **Prof. Véronique Chankowski**, Director, École française d'Athènes – closing institutional remarks

13:00–14:30

*Working lunch – informal continuation of the discussions*

*This event is organized in partnership with Ecole française d'Athènes et Michael Culture Association*

