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Answer given by Mr Tzitzikostas
on behalf of the European Commission
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1. The European Heritage Label (EHL), with 80 sites, focuses on promotion, access, and education. Although the number of sites is increasing, its impact on tourism in Europe remains limited.

The latest evaluation of the European Capitals of Culture (ECoC)[1] shows that it drives tourism, particularly in smaller, less-visited cities. An increasing number of small and medium-sized cities take part in the ECoC competition and hold the ECoC title.

2. Almost 50% of EHL sites are in rural settings or smaller towns, highlighting European significance in regions[2]. Therefore, allocation of resources for communications and capacity building for these sites is already significant, and itis continuously evaluated and used to inform future actions.

The Commission is drafting the proposal for the post-2033 ECoC legal framework, considering the latest evaluation, the Call for Evidence and recommendations from stakeholders. The promotion of local heritage, also in rural areas, will be taken into consideration in the general ECoC purpose to develop cultural programmes with a strong European dimension.

The Commission is also considering new actions to promote emerging and less known destinations through the upcoming European Sustainable Tourism Strategy.

3. Ongoing evaluation of the action and feedback from the open public consultation and call for evidence do not show that EHL sites face conservation challenges from unbalanced tourism. Therefore, it is not expected to adapt the criteria in that regard.

The Commission is updating the selection criteria of the ECoC. It will especially consider the sustainability dimension but also the legacy dimension.

[1] https://culture.ec.europa.eu/whats-new/news/european-commission-evaluates-impact-of-european-capitals-of-culture.
[2] https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/b8f452ec-fb06-11ef-b7db-01aa75ed71a1.