

International Centre for Underwater Archaeology in Zadar (ICUA)

UNESCO Category II Centre

The International Centre for Underwater Archaeology in Zadar was founded in 2007 in the frame of the Croatian Conservation Institute and soon ♦ pursuant to an international agreement signed between UNESCO and the Republic of Croatia in 2009 ♦ became an independent public institution and gained the status of a UNESCO category II centre. Management is conducted and primary funding provided by the Republic of Croatia and UNESCO.

Vision

The International Centre for Underwater Archaeology in Zadar aims to preserve and promote underwater cultural heritage in Croatia, the Mediterranean and Europe.

Mission

The International Centre for Underwater Archaeology in Zadar works to protect, study and preserve underwater cultural heritage in Croatia; to develop international professional and research collaboration and education in the field of underwater archaeology; to present and popularise underwater heritage among the public at large and to promote the UNESCO Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage.

	
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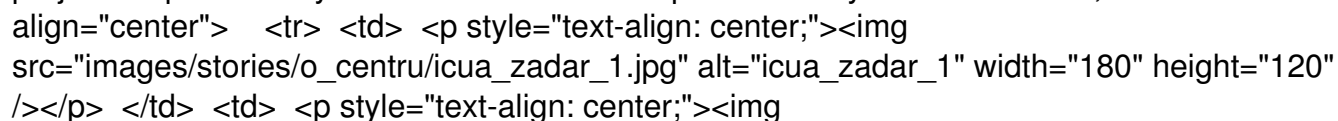
Founding

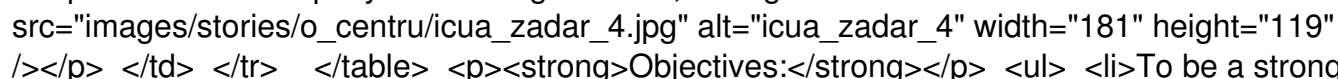
Underwater archaeology made significant advances in Croatia at the dawn of the 21st century with a quality system of archaeological surveying, investigation and protection of underwater archaeological sites and finds. The International Centre for Underwater Archaeology in Zadar opened its doors in September of 2007 as part of the Croatian Conservation Institute. In January of 2009 ICUA became a separate legal entity ♦ that year also saw the signing of an international agreement between UNESCO and Croatia covering the scope of ICUA activity. Since then, operating as the International Centre for Underwater Archaeology in Zadar and under the administration of the Croatian Ministry of Culture and UNESCO, ICUA has developed its programme activities. 2016 saw the renewal of the international agreement between Croatia and UNESCO for the coming six-year period. The decision to found ICUA was grounded largely on the fact that Croatia was among the first countries to ratify the 2001 UNESCO Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage. UNESCO accepted the Croatian initiative to declare ICUA Zadar a category II international centre under its auspices.

ICUA's core tasks are to conduct activities and education in the fields of research, conservation and restoration and the promotion of underwater cultural heritage, in particular at the international level. Through its activity ICUA is also a strong proponent of the ratification and implementation of UNESCO's 2001 Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage. ICUA works in accordance with the principles laid out in the Convention and its annex and contributes to expanding opportunities in other European and Mediterranean countries. Through its work in developing and disseminating the latest methods of investigation in underwater archaeology, conservation and restoration, training and the exchange of knowledge, ICUA Zadar has become an important focal point for these activities in this part of Europe. ICUA has a significant regional dimension in its work, with an emphasis on the countries of central and southeast Europe and the broader Mediterranean region. Given the nature of archaeological finds and sites, we foresee more intensive collaboration with countries across all of Europe.

The Republic of Croatia provides essential funding for ICUA core costs, while funding required for the implementation of individual programmes are secured from a diverse range of sources,

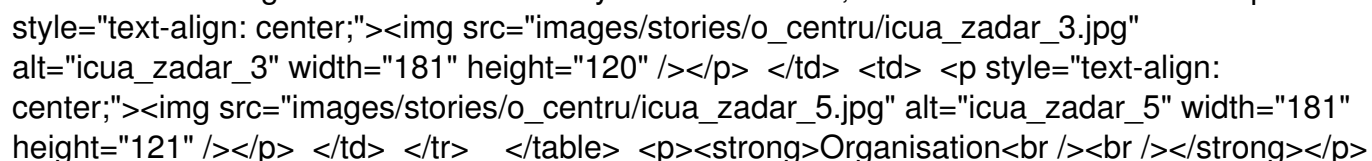
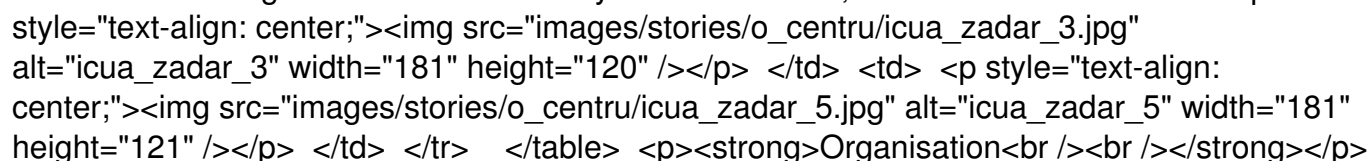
depending on the programme or project in question. Funding for international programmes and projects is provided by international sources.


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Objectives:

- To be a strong proponent of the 2001 Convention and its implementation in the European Union, Southeast Europe and in other UNESCO member states.
- To operate as a focal point of activities and provide a platform for dialogue and participation in the field of underwater archaeology within the European Union, Southeast Europe and around the world.
- To provide professional training for conservation and underwater archaeology experts at the national and international levels in both practical and theoretical aspects.
- To encourage international cooperation with the aim of advancing scientific research related to underwater cultural heritage sites, to analyse finds and to present, conserve and restore artefacts extracted from wet environments and to be engaged in international efforts promoting these objectives.
- To organise international conferences, seminars and workshops and to exchange knowledge in the field of underwater archaeology.
- To inform the public of its activities and to educate the public with the aim of raising awareness in a broader scope of the value and significance of underwater heritage.

	
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Organisation

The Education and Documentation Department

The education and documentation department has now operated successfully within ICUA for six years. The lion's share of its work is in organising education in underwater archaeology, with introductory and advanced underwater archaeology courses staged at ICUA every year following the UNESCO/ICUA programme. We also stage courses based on the NAS underwater archaeology syllabus ♦ the Centre is an official training partner of the NAS. In the future ICUA will also stage diving courses following the NAUI training system. For in-the-field diving activities ICUA has eight sets of diving equipment, a scuba tank filling compressor and an equipped motorboat. ICUA has a comfortable dormitory for the accommodation of course participants and a large, fully equipped lecture hall. The department also organises a broad range of expert symposia, seminars, congresses and individual lectures. Students and visiting specialists have at their disposal a specialised and well-equipped library with several thousand titles and the separate Von Petrikovits Library. ICUA's documentation activity is focused on creating a new Central Underwater Heritage Digital Database ♦ machu.hr, and on continual care for existing underwater archaeology archival records. All department staff members are engaged in the research and study of underwater heritage in the frame of international projects with a broad range of institutions and the dissemination of scientific insight via lectures, publication in books and other print materials.

The Conservation and Restoration Department

For in-house requirements and for a growing number of museums, universities and private sector companies the conservation and restoration department organises and conducts all types of conservation-restoration work on movable artefacts of underwater and terrestrial archaeological heritage from all historical

periods. At Croatia's largest archaeological finds workshop, conservation and restoration work is carried out by a trained specialist team ♦ adhering to the highest criteria of the conservation-restoration profession. The department has at its disposal restoration workshops with modern equipment specialised in the conservation and restoration of artefacts of ceramic, stone, glass, metal, wood and other organic materials. In conducting conservation-restoration work, along with a range of instrumentation for mechanical and ultrasonic cleaning, we also use high quality systems for the desalination of archaeological material, potentiometric titration, the impregnation of wet and dry archaeological wood, electrochemical treatment, vacuum impregnation of porous materials and the chemical desalination of iron. Along with direct interventions on cultural property, we also conduct instrumentation monitoring of physico-chemical processes, measurements of salinity, the percentage of moisture in wood, chloride concentration and pH level, with chemical analyses of materials and radiography conducted in collaboration with outside laboratories. Documentation and preliminary research of the initial condition and causes of decay, the desalination and stabilisation of materials, structural consolidation, cleaning, reconstruction and integration, the final protection of an artefact, and the drafting of expert reports and guidelines for the storage of cultural property are all carried out during conservation-restoration treatment. The conservation-restoration work carried out and the results of conservation research are presented through a broad range of published material and at specialist symposia in the country and abroad. In collaboration with other related and university institutions, the department participates in mentorship work and organises and conducts international education programmes in the field of conservation and restoration.

The Underwater Heritage Presentation Department

The underwater heritage presentation department is in the inception phase, but has already successfully staged exhibitions at the ICUA gallery in Zadar. Plans are in place to see it soon assume collection, exhibition and maintenance tasks related to the collection of a future ICUA underwater archaeology museum. The museum is to be housed in the building of the former Sveti Nikola church, a beautiful edifice where comprehensive restoration and adaptation work is soon to be undertaken to convert it into a presentation centre. The department will employ curators and other staff that will work on the collection, organisation, storage, protection, professional treatment and exhibition of museum inventory. The department will also be responsible for keeping all necessary museum documentation on the inventory and for all other tasks as stipulated in regulations. Besides classic museum exhibition, the department will also present underwater heritage as multimedia content and applying other suitable and innovative methods. Along with the museum presentation of the ICUA collection at the Sveti Nikola premises, the department will also be engaged in organising, establishing and maintaining underwater museums at protected sites in the Adriatic Sea. The department's specialist staff will also conduct the research and study of underwater heritage with the purpose of its presentation and popularisation.mentorship work and organises and conducts international education programmes in the field of conservation and restoration.

The International Cooperation and Funding Department

The core objective of the department is to develop international and regional cultural cooperation, cooperation with other UNESCO centres and with institutions to ensure the development and exchange of knowledge and the application of good practices among partner institutions.

One of the key responsibilities of the department is to promote ICUA at the national, regional and

international level, and to inform the broader public of ICUA activities with the aim of raising awareness of the importance of underwater cultural heritage and the need for its preservation as an integral part of humanity's cultural heritage.

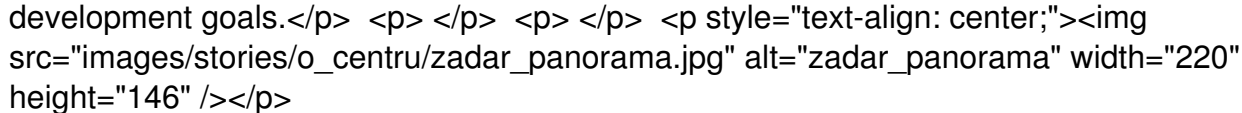
The department works to promote the 2001 UNESCO Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage in the European Union, Southeast Europe and other UNESCO member countries.

The department is tasked with the mission of developing international collaboration related to scientific research with UNESCO member countries and their inclusion and collaboration in the frame of UNESCO's UNITWIN network, concluding and implementing bilateral agreements and to stage international scientific conferences, symposia, workshops and other meetings.

The department will carry out various activities in order to preserve and strengthen cultural heritage and to support the cultural and creative sector of the EU and to highlight the strong economic role of cultural heritage.

The department also prepares projects and drafts documentation necessary for applications to European Union funds and other sources of funding.

ICUA develops additional value through the promotion of sustainable development in the preservation of underwater cultural heritage in its international cultural cooperation in line with the UN's 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its sustainable development goals.

A panoramic view of Zadar, showing the city's architecture and the sea.