

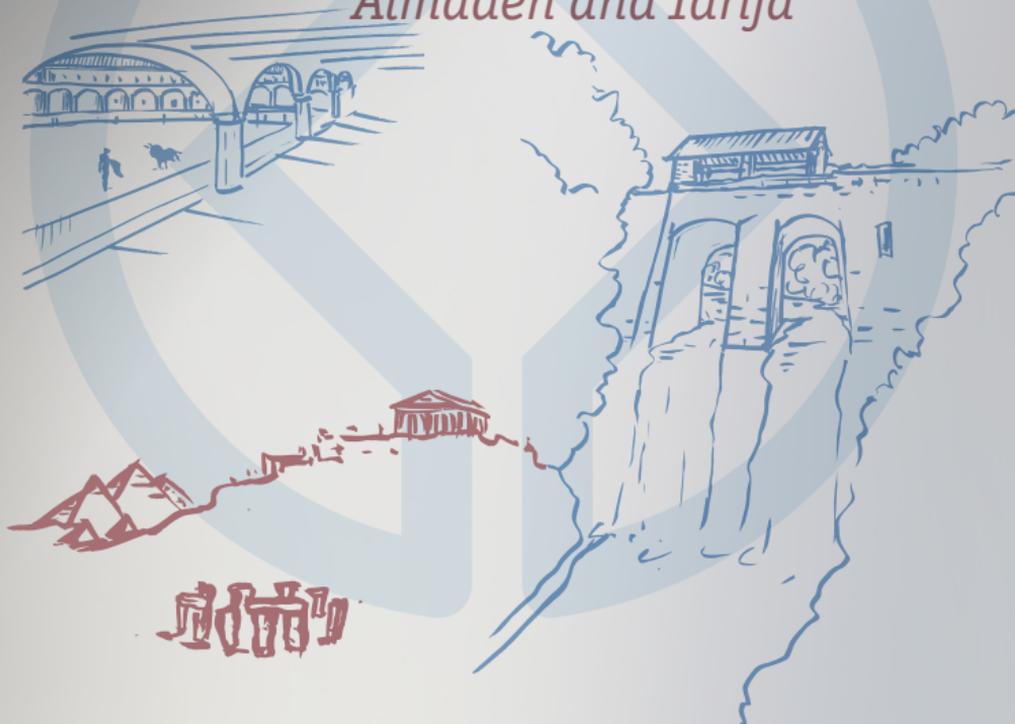


**unesco**

World Heritage site

# 10 questions for 10 years

of **UNESCO** world  
*“Heritage of Mercury.  
Almadén and Idrija”*



# 10 questions for 10 years

of **UNESCO** world  
"Heritage of Mercury."  
*Almadén and Idríja*"

Issued on the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of inscription of "Heritage of Mercury. Almadén and Idríja" on the UNESCO World Heritage List and the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Convention for the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage.



Center za upravljanje  
z dediščino živega srebra  
**IDRJA** Mercury Heritage  
Management Centre



REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA  
**MINISTRY OF CULTURE**



OBČINA IDRJA



MESTNI MUZEJ IDRJA



**Heritage of  
Mercury.**  
Almadén and Idríja

**10<sup>th</sup>**  
anniversary of inscription  
on the UNESCO list

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# WHAT

is the **UNESCO**  
*World Heritage List?*

1.





**T**he United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) adopted the **Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage** in Paris in 1972. The Convention protects cultural and natural sites that go beyond local and national importance and are important for humanity as a whole. Their preservation and protection are of the utmost importance for future generations as well. The World Heritage List includes exceptional cultural and natural monuments and areas from all over the world.

# WHAT

*does it mean to be included on  
the World Cultural and Natural  
Heritage List?*

2.





**E**ntry on the World Cultural and Natural Heritage List is a recognition of an **outstanding universal value** that must be protected for the benefit of all mankind. The international recognition of the outstanding industrial heritage related to mercury is a recognition of the efforts of generations who have preserved this heritage to this day, the local community that lived with it and the experts who researched, valued and cared for it.



# WHEN

*was the "Heritage of Mercury.  
Almadén and Idrija"*

***enlisted on the World  
Heritage List?***

3.





3.



**A** *t its meeting in St. Petersburg on **30 June 2012**, the World Heritage Committee decided that “The Heritage of Mercury. Almadén and Idrija” would be included on the World Heritage List in accordance with the UNESCO Convention for the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage.*

# WHAT

*are the **criteria** on the basis  
of which the mercury  
heritage has been inscribed on  
the World Heritage List?*

4.





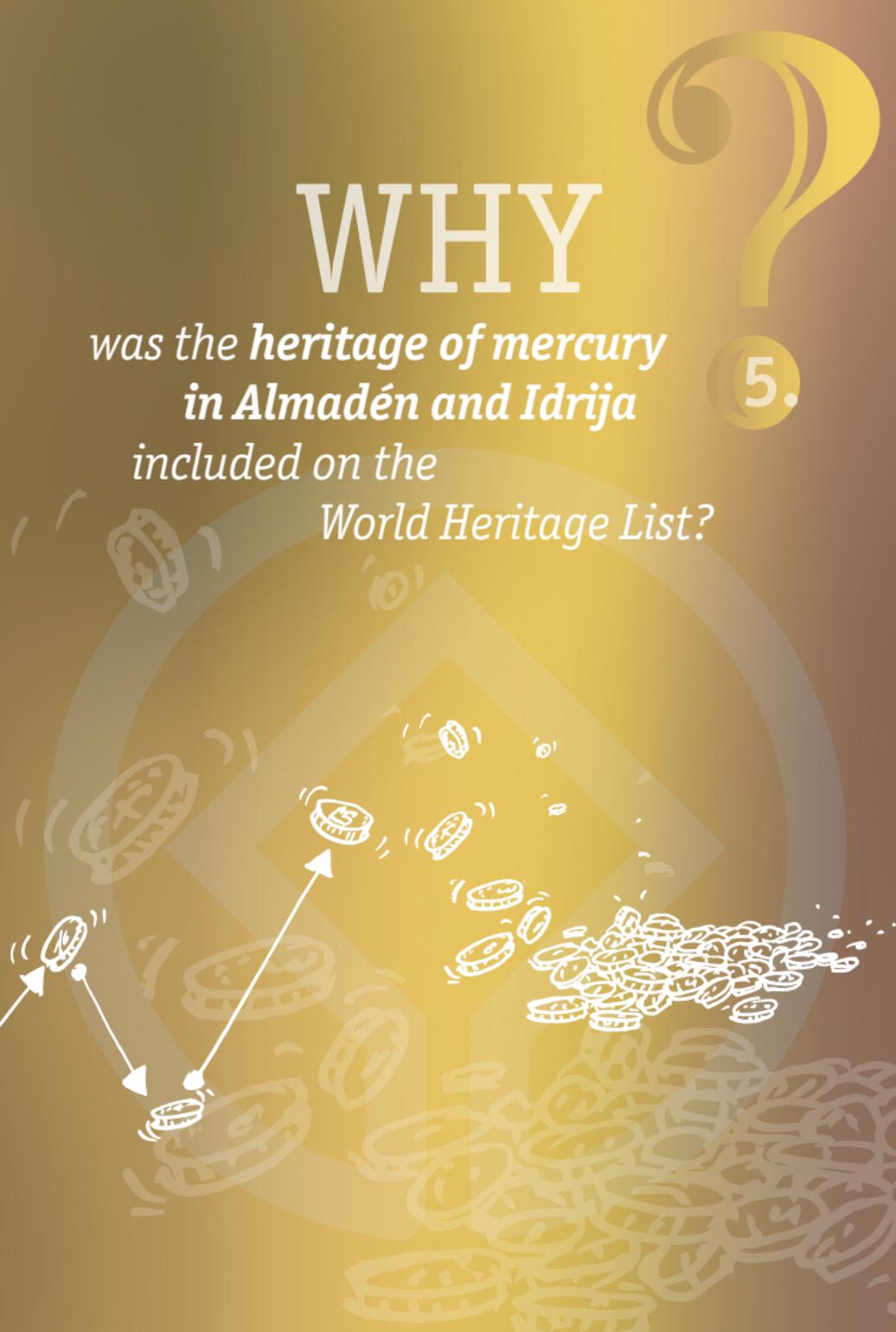
**I**n order to be included on the World Heritage List, the area **must meet at least one of the ten criteria.** *“The Heritage of Mercury. Almadén and Idrija”* was included on the UNESCO List on the basis of selection criteria (ii) – to exhibit an important interchange of human values, over a span of time or within a cultural area of the world, on developments in architecture or technology, monumental arts, town-planning or landscape design; and (iv) – to be an outstanding example of a type of building, architectural or technological ensemble or landscape that illustrates (a) significant stage(s) in human history. The area must also be well preserved, adequately protected and have regulated management.

# WHY

*was the heritage of mercury  
in Almadén and Idrija  
included on the*

*World Heritage List?*

5.





**T**he Almadén (Spain) and Idrija (Slovenia) mercury mines were **geographically separate mining areas, but historically connected and today they tell the story of mercury together.** In Almadén, mercury had been mined for more than 2,000 years, while in Idrija, the only liquid metal had been mined for just over 500 years. They co-created the past, when mercury was a fundamental driver of economic development and an accelerator of mutual cultural influences on a narrower and wider global scale.

# WHAT

*represents the  
UNESCO mercury heritage  
in Almadén and Idrija?*

6.





6.



**A** *Imadén and Idrija represent the heritage of mercury in a technical, economic, general-cultural, urban, social and ecological sense. **The heritage of mercury includes the heritage of the mines and mining:** ore deposits, tunnels, shafts, industrial buildings, profane and sacral architecture and a mining-related way of life.*

# WHY

*was mercury important  
on a global scale?*

7.





**M**ercury is relatively rare and the only metal that is liquid at room temperature, being 13.6 times heavier than water or 2 times heavier than iron. The mercury obtained in Almadén and Idrija was used in the amalgamation process in Central and South America since the mid 16<sup>th</sup> century for gold and silver mining to extract these precious metals, which were returned to Europe as capital and **stimulated the development of the modern economy, science and art, as well as culture in general.** Mercury was recognised in the 20<sup>th</sup> century as a global polluter of the environment and dangerous to human health, and therefore it has been replaced by various substitutes and the mines are closing down.

# WHAT

*are the most important  
objects of the UNESCO  
mercury heritage in Almadén?*

8.





*he most important objects of the UNESCO mercury heritage in Almadén are:*

- *Baritel San Carlos - underground space and Malakate - winch (18<sup>th</sup> century),*
- *Bustamante - furnaces (18<sup>th</sup> century),*
- *Puerta de Carros - the wagon doors (17<sup>th</sup> century) and Puerta de Carlos IV - the gates of Charles IV, which marked the beginning of the mercury route to Seville,*
- *Mining Academy (18<sup>th</sup> century),*
- *Arena for bullfights (18<sup>th</sup> century) with rental apartments for miners, and*
- *The Royal Mining Hospital of St. Rafael (18<sup>th</sup> century).*

# WHAT

are *the most important*  
*objects* of the UNESCO  
mercury heritage in Idrija?

9.



# 9.



# T

*he most important objects of the UNESCO mercury heritage in Idrija are:*

- *Anthony's Main Road - the oldest part of the Idrija mine (16<sup>th</sup> century),*
- *Mercury ore burning site with the Čermak-Špirek furnace (18<sup>th</sup> century) and the rotary furnace (20<sup>th</sup> century),*
- *Kamšt - water-powered pump (18<sup>th</sup> century),*
- *Gewerkenegg Castle - the mining administrative building and mercury warehouse (16<sup>th</sup> century),*
- *Magazin - the mine warehouse for grain (18<sup>th</sup> century),*
- *Mine theatre (18<sup>th</sup> century) and*
- *Klavže water barriers - constructed water barrier for timber floating (18<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> century).*

# WHO

*is responsible for the  
**protection, preservation and  
presentation** of the mercury  
world heritage site in Almadén  
and Idrija?*

10.



# 10.



**T**he owners, managers, the local community and the state are responsible for the protection, preservation and presentation of the world heritage site. The umbrella governing body is the “Heritage of Mercury. Almadén and Idrija” International Coordination Committee, which consists of twelve members; six representatives of Spain and six representatives of Slovenia by managers, and professional and state institutions.