

PRESS RELEASE

Russia loses participation in European Tree of the Year due to invasion of Ukraine

The Partnership Foundation, the main organiser of the European Tree of the Year, has excluded the Russian Federation from the European Tree of the Year competition. Sixteen European countries are competing in the international poll, the voting for which is now peaking, and Russia was represented by the Turgenev oak tree from the village of Lutovinovo in the Orel region. It was around 4th place in the intermediate results. The organisers justified the move by the Russian military presence in Ukraine.

*"We at the Partnership Foundation are appalled by the aggression of the Russian Federation, which has militarily invaded neighbouring Ukraine. We therefore join the activities aimed at the international isolation of Russia. With immediate effect, **we are putting the Russian Federation out of the running in the international European Tree of the Year competition,**"* comments **Josef Jarý**, the organiser of the competition.

The famous oak of the Spasskoye-Lutovinovo estate, which is inextricably linked with the name of I. S. Turgenev, was unfortunately taken by storm, but remained in people's memory as a natural and historical symbol, a legendary tree. The Turgenev Oak, planted according to legend by Ivan Sergejevich himself, has witnessed remarkable historical events and the lives of famous personalities.

"The move in question is not directed against ordinary Russian women and men. We appreciate all active citizens of the Russian Federation who strive for a free civil society and the protection of nature. However, we cannot stand idly by and watch the unprecedented aggression of the Russian leadership against a neighbouring country. The exclusion of Russia from the competition is a step that must be understood in the context of international efforts to isolate Russia in order to stop the war," adds Jary.

The results of the poll - now without Russian participation - will be announced on **22 March in Brussels**.

More information on:

www.evropskystromroku.cz.

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