PRESS RELEASE

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A word that slept since 1612 is waking up: a Calabrian town of 4,000 becomes Italy's first «Città della Dimoranza» and opens a register for its 30,000 descendants worldwide

MAIDA, ITALY. There is an Italian word that slept for four centuries and is now on the desk of Italy's oldest language academy, in the official acts of a Calabrian town council, and in the pages of a New York newspaper. The word is ***dimoranza***. It appears in the first edition of the Vocabolario degli Accademici della Crusca, printed in Venice in 1612, and then fell out of use. It was brought back to life by Luca Cervadoro, a local historian from Maida, a town of four thousand people in the province of Catanzaro, whose essay «DIMORANZA. Manifesto per una Civiltà Ubiqua» (June 2026) turned its meaning inside out: no longer a person dwelling in a place, but a place that goes on dwelling in a person, and in that person's children and grandchildren, even when they have never seen it.

On 29 July 2026 the Town Council of Maida unanimously approved Resolution no. 25, «Maida, Città della Dimoranza», with majority and opposition voting together. The resolution establishes a Municipal Register of Dimoranti, a Certificate of Dimoranza and an annual Day of the Dimorante: symbolic instruments, at no cost to the municipal budget, addressed to the estimated thirty thousand descendants of Maida's emigrants in the United States, Canada, Argentina, Australia and Europe. The first application to the Register came from Youngstown, Ohio.

The word has been formally submitted to the Accademia della Crusca and to the Treccani encyclopaedia with a dossier of attestations; the concept is under discussion with Italy's Ministry of Culture and the Calabria Region for a regional network project; and the Italian National Commission for UNESCO, consulted by the author, has indicated the path for cataloguing it as living intangible cultural heritage. On 14 September 2026 La Voce di New York, an Italian-American outlet with a correspondence office accredited at the United Nations, devoted an article in English and in Italian to the story, written by Grace Russo Bullaro, linking it to Gay Talese: the father of the celebrated American writer, Giuseppe Talese, emigrated to Ocean City, New Jersey, from Maida.

«The meaning was inverted», Cervadoro explains. «No longer a person who lives in a place, but a place that keeps living in a person, and in that person's children,

even when they have never set foot there.» The book, self-published and translated into six languages, has reached the catalogues of booksellers on five continents without a single euro spent on promotion. **Information and contacts: www.dimoranza.it, stampa@dimoranza.it.**

Notes for editors

Dimoranza (pronounced dee-mo-RAHN-tsa) is an Italian noun. The author suggests leaving it untranslated, as La Voce di New York did. The nearest English gloss is «the dwelling of a place inside a person», distinct from nostalgia (centred on the person who remembers) and from homesickness (which requires a home one has lived in). Full documentation, the Council resolution with an English summary, photographs and cover images are available without request at stampa.dimoranza.it/en.

The word has been submitted to the Accademia della Crusca, not recognised by it; the Register of Dimoranti is symbolic and has no legal effect on citizenship.

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