

Theme 2: The Historic Urban Landscape and Evolution of Urban Heritage Governance Concept.

8. EXPRESSIONS OF CULTURE IN THE MANAGEMENT OF HISTORIC CITIES. AN EXAMPLE OF COMMUNICATION THROUGH HERITAGE CONSERVATION PRACTICES FOR THE SUSTAINABLE PRESERVATION OF THE HISTORIC CENTER OF KULDIGA

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1. The management of historic cities is not only about preserving the living environment, but also about the people who use it. One of the related areas is anthropology, which recognizes that communication is the essence of culture and, in fact, the very essence of life itself and culture consists of webs of concepts that people weave around themselves. Communication - language, art, music, dance, text, movie, sound recording and software - are the tools people use to explain, reproduce, preserve and transform these value webs. Cultural heritage is "a collection of these resources" over time.¹ In media theory, belonging to one of the cultures means seeing and knowing the world, communicating with it in such a way as to renew that culture day by day.

2. The established practice that is communicated about heritage conservation through the direct involvement of residents in heritage conservation, not only by educating them, but by involving them in the maintenance of the building and its parts - such as windows - on the one hand and the involvement of the municipality as a governing body in organizing and funding, understanding the shared responsibility for the preservation of common cultural values, on the other hand, is directly the practice of Governance and Participation in the Valetta Principles and its in-depth understanding, which has led to the conclusion that participation has great potential and benefits.

3. Recognizing the strategic importance of the cultural heritage for the development of the city, the Kuldiga Historical Center is managed through an action plan that includes an intentional heritage conservation policy - practical activities such as communication with the cultural heritage. One example is the regular workshops of historic window restoration, where the residents of the buildings, with their manual labour and municipal support - financial, documentational and demonstration and supervision of the work of a restorer / consultant - gain access to historical evidence through their conservation activities. Every year more and more historic windows are renewed, and residents learn about maintenance of buildings, accepting it as a useful tool for living in a historic environment. Window restoration activities are a reason for communicating heritage with professionals and enthusiasts as well as neighbors and other residents of the historic center. It is an opportunity to understand the living in the historic center, also for newcomers - fostering belonging to the environment and its values.

The results of this practice can be seen not only in the restored historic buildings, their details, improved knowledge and renewable practices (after a break of 60 years), but also have influenced the preservation of the heritage in the region, the practice has been taken over in the Baltics and even Finland, Norway.

Appropriate forms of communication based on local values can be found in heritage conservation practices that promote and sustain living evidence of tangible and intangible heritage while addressing community-wide challenges or needs. This form of communication has also been recognized by the Europa Nostra when granting its award.

4. Such a communication practice through maintenance is a participation in direct sense - maintaining the heritage - the buildings and their parts do not require extensive restoration or alteration work that can reduce the value of the original. Also, the participation of the municipality in the maintenance of the common heritage, which is recognized as a common value.

The elements to be preserved, which form a specific character, must be supplemented to the above-mentioned principles also with the composition and details of the facade.

¹ Council of Europe, 2005. Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society, Council of Europe Treaty Series - No. 199, Faro.