

## Abstract

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### Theme 1: Introduction to Integrated and Sustainable Development of Historic Cities

Historic cities face severe challenges: The globalization of markets and methods of production causes shifts in population between regions and towns, especially large cities. Changes in political governance and in business practices require new strategies and new conditions in towns and urban areas. These are also necessary to counteract segregation and social rootlessness as parts of attempts to reinforce identity.

The safeguarding of historic cities and towns and their surroundings has to be aware of their tangible and intangible values and of the impact of interventions on the quality of life of the inhabitants. The cultural diversity of the different communities must be respected and valued. Historic heritage should be now reflected on a regional scale. Intangible values such as continuity and identity are becoming more and more important. The respect of the 'spirit of place' must be a fundamental part of the urban project. Constituent for historic cities is their urban fabric, urban structure and patterns, layers, the traditional morphology and the townscape including their topography and skyline. To ensure a harmonious integrated development of historic towns it is fundamental to consider heritage as an essential resource and as part of the urban ecosystem.

Heritage is not just monuments: It is identity, memory and sense of place. Heritage has a crucial role within the development process: Creating social cohesion, stimulating growth, reducing poverty, fostering socio-economic cooperation, increasing the density of urban cores and containing the anarchic spread of new buildings, enhancing long-term tourism benefits by preserving cultural resources, strengthening social fabric and enhancing social well-being, enhancing the appeal and creativity of regions.

The safeguarding and management of historic town must be guided by a systematic and holistic approach in accordance with the principles of sustainable development. By highlighting the role heritage plays in both the spatial and social qualities of cities, the Urban Agenda and also the Agenda 2030, establish a strong, comprehensive and progressive role for cultural heritage in urban sustainable development.

The value of heritage has changed over time and will continue to evolve in the future. The work of conservation professionals is increasingly carried out in the context of spatial redevelopment and transformation of the built environment under extreme pressure of improving physical and social infrastructure. Practical sustainable conservation continues to grow with intangible heritage values now firmly embedded in the conservation of tangible heritage and moreover with conservation now being part of development. Adaptive reuse of heritage buildings and sites being confronted with both technical issues as well social and economic concerns is an important task to make a heritage project relevant to contemporary society.

The preservation of built cultural heritage, that has aesthetic and socio-economic values, is to a major extent about connecting society with its heritage. Not only does it seem that society is not completely aware of the value of that heritage but the challenge is also how that undervalued

cultural heritage can contribute to the aspirations of society.

Necessary in the heritage field is an alliance of civil societies: a society of communities and owners. Answers to the question have still to be found, how civil societies can contribute to the sustainable development of cultural heritage.