



Organisation des villes du patrimoine mondial
Organization of World Heritage Cities
Organización de las Ciudades del Patrimonio Mundial
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منظمة مدن التراث العالمي

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Safeguarding and Further Developing World Heritage Cities

Position Paper



ORGANIZATION OF WORLD HERITAGE CITIES

SUMMARY

Built environments that are especially worthy of protection, like UNESCO World Heritage Cities, are often affected by intensive use from a wide range of municipal functions. Tourism and associated transportation uses, alongside residential and commercial uses in the retail and service industries, can affect the ecclesiastical and public functions (of a town). This leads to conflicts and requires special and careful planning that is coordinated and integrated. In addition to the resultant challenges, such as achieving a desirable balance between residential and event uses, there lie, within balance, great opportunities to advance economic development by using the UNESCO World Heritage status. In this way a city can develop its own competitive profile. New challenges such as demographic change, climate change, migration trends, and the resultant needs for integration can only be overcome by integrated approaches and an appropriate administrative framework.

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PRELIMINARY REMARKS

I. Context

Albeit there are numerous case studies and descriptions of the World Heritage mission from a cultural history and scientific point of view, the literature on UNESCO World Heritage makes very little reference to local administrative actions and to integrated urban development. These are deficits that need to be recognized with respect to associated sub-topics, working methods and political implications. The UNESCO recommendation on the Historic Urban Environment (2011)¹ promotes the idea of integrated site management, but there are few case studies to date showing how this might be achieved. World Heritage must not be viewed as being outside of the context of integrated city development, in isolation rather than in connection to city-wide and small-spatial contexts.

Against this backdrop, the Regional Secretariat Northwest Europe of the Organization of World Heritage Cities (OWHC) and its member cities developed the idea that the subject of “World Heritage in the context of integrated urban development” be dealt with in a position paper by the towns themselves. Given the immediate experience of the members of the Regional Secretariat, they were to describe the relevant areas of work and issues of concern. This paper would later serve as the basis for political recommendations at various administrative levels and would initially address internal administrative structures.

The paper would primarily apply to towns that have an extensive World Heritage designation (in the text, reference is made to UNESCO World Heritage Towns/World Heritage Towns). It became apparent that various sections would also apply to towns with other World Heritage sites (i.e. individual buildings, ensembles, industrial heritage sites, etc.). In these cases one would speak of World Heritage sites. Moreover, several references were made that would generally apply to historic towns with a rich monumental heritage.

2. The Idea of World Heritage

On 16 November 1972, UNESCO adopted the “Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage.” It is internationally the only significant instrument ever adopted by the United Nations for the protection of its cultural and natural heritage. Worldwide 981 properties are inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List² of which 759 are cultural properties. They fall under the protection of the International Convention on the Cultural and Natural Heritage of Humanity. The guiding principle of the World Heritage Convention is “[the consideration] that parts of the cultural or natural heritage are of outstanding interest and therefore need to be preserved as part of the world heritage of mankind as a whole.”³

3. Significance of the UNESCO Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage

With the signing of the Convention the signatory states undertake to protect the UNESCO World Heritage sites located within their territory and to preserve them for future generations. Sites and buildings are only

1. http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL_ID=48857&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html.

2. Source: <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/>, Last update Sept. 2013.

3. Preamble to the UNESCO Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage.

accepted on to the World Heritage List if they meet the criteria of “uniqueness” and “authenticity” (for cultural sites) laid down in the Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention¹ and if a convincing “conservation plan” is present.

With the ratification of the UNESCO Convention from 1972, the states commit themselves to the observance of the aims formulated in it. This is accompanied by the binding agreement to conscientiously keep this promise and to fulfil the duties arising from it. To this end, the states are called upon as a signatory. According to Article 5 of the Convention “(...) each State Party to this Convention shall endeavour (...)

a) to adopt a general policy which aims to give the cultural and natural heritage a function in the life of the community and to integrate the protection of that heritage into comprehensive planning programmes;

b) to set up within its territories, where such services do not exist, one or more services for the protection, conservation and presentation of the cultural and natural heritage with an appropriate staff and possessing the means to discharge their functions; (...)

d) to take the appropriate legal, scientific, technical, administrative and financial measures necessary for the identification, protection, conservation, presentation and rehabilitation of this heritage; (...)”²

The responsibility of the State Party’s government to comply with the requirements of the Convention relates to “(...) effective and active measures for the protection, conservation and presentation of the cultural and natural heritage situated on its territory (...)” (Article 5).

Obligations are laid on the towns as executing agencies (within the scope of implementing statutory building regulations, monument protection regulations, and other statutory regulations), and, likewise, on the individual owners of the listed buildings.

1. Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention.

2. Article 5, UNESCO Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage.



City of Regensburg (© Peter Ferstl)



City of Visby (© City of Visby)

PARAMETERS AND CHALLENGES FOR UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE TOWNS

The World Heritage designation has become a source of pride sought by many towns. The distinction promises recognition, but also, more specifically, an increase in tourist numbers, which in turn provide economic growth to a town. At a local level, though, the World Heritage designation is sometimes perceived as a hindrance to growth-driven urban development that addresses current urban needs. The usual changes that happen in other towns are realized only in a limited way, or are harder to achieve in the protected inventories of a World Heritage City or a World Heritage area. Hence, it is necessary to develop integrated concepts by weighing the different concerns.

1. General Parameters for the Urban Development of Historic Towns

In the future, towns will increasingly face new challenges, such as climate change, demographic shifts, migration or, more specifically, integration. Future towns will have to react to societal and social changes. Additional parameters will be needed as a result of infrastructural changes, public mobility, as well as changes in private sector business.

The resultant tasks for planning in historic towns can only be surmounted by taking into consideration special requirements. In an ideal situation matters around the conservation of World Heritage towns would be a perfect extension of the developmental requirements of cities, each strengthening the other. However, this necessitates an intensive examination of the relationship and the courage to find innovative solutions.

At issue is often the spatial distribution of different city uses. Old town centres can, individually, only accommodate a reduced level of employment, vehicular traffic, pollution, etc. Since the 1960's motorized private transport has been increasing and its impact on historic old towns has been detrimental. This has posed a constant challenge to numerous local authorities. Town planners are equally challenged in developing future viable transport networks that take into consideration the spatial, economic, and social factors of historic towns¹.

2. Particular challenges for UNESCO World Heritage Towns

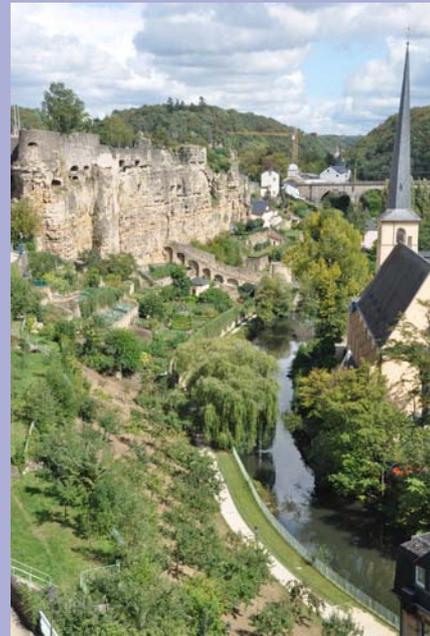
Due to the application and inclusion on the UNESCO list, World Heritage Cities have committed themselves to preserving their cultural heritage for future generations and to ensuring the integrity of their heritage's Outstanding Universal Value. It follows that they must rise to particular challenges that also address buffer zones.

In some cases UNESCO World Heritage Cities have over a thousand-year-old history. Their urban development can be traced over long periods and can be clearly identified. They have all experienced organic growth, but many have incurred few destructive losses either by wars or targeted demolitions and the old towns have remained largely unchanged. Extensions to the town layout can be clearly visible and easily documented. The unique characteristics of old towns must continue to be part of the consideration given to further urban development. New buildings must prove to be a complement to the inventory deemed worthy of protection and be seen to preserve the special character of the World Heritage city. Development plans are exemplary when they preserve the special character of the World Heritage. This is especially true when dealing with and

1. Expansion of local public transport, integration of pedestrian areas and cycle paths, parking space management, development and adaptation of a retail trade concept (integrated urban development).



City of Bath - Roman Baths
(© Andrew Dunn)



City of Luxembourg - Bock Casemates and Alzette Valley (© Cathy Giorgetti)

carefully examining the artistic aspects of inherited townscapes that have been destroyed or badly damaged in the last two hundred years by progressive industrialisation, acts of war, and their aftermath.

European historic towns have highly integrated functions that pose a continuous challenge to conservation. Additional demands are placed in part on stakeholders by the divergent interests and conflicts that result when mediating uses. Moreover, historic towns are to be viewed as part of the surrounding cultural landscape. It follows then that a UNESCO World Heritage City give priority to its urban architectural heritage, both in terms of an individual property and an ensemble, as well as to the conservation of a distinctive, unified townscape.

Towns have to apply urban design measures that fall within the responsibilities of municipal self-administration. Consequently, they must assume responsibility for the field of planning. This not only strengthens their resolve but also their autonomy. Responsible self-administration is the noblest duty of council members and administrative employees. World Heritage Cities in particular have committed themselves to protecting their architectural heritage. This is not to be taken for granted. There are towns with many buildings of “Outstanding Universal Value” (OUV), i.e. buildings of extraordinary worldwide significance, that have refused to keep their commitment, or have violated it by exercising their guaranteed right to self-administration.

However, towns do have the opportunity and instruments to promote urban development and architectural heritage in a way that uses and maintains World Heritage as a unique mark of distinction.

2.1. Conservation and Protection of the UNESCO World Heritage

In context, preservation and protection cannot simply mean the safekeeping of houses, squares, parks and gardens, city structures and the alike. World Heritage towns are vibrant places where people live, work and visit; they must embrace and manage change and view preservation in the sense of conservation and restoration. The extraordinary worldwide significance of a World Heritage site is based within the framework of a detailed application procedure. The intention of the framework is to protect the authenticity of original World Heritage sites and to address exactly those protected objects specified for inclusion on the World Heritage List. Analogous to the conservation efforts of other historic towns, the protection of UNESCO World Heritage Cities, and the priority given to their “Outstanding Universal Value” (OUV) secures their

status as World Heritage. What is more, past failings must be revisited to a large extent, particularly when active conservation work and, in some cases, restoration work has not occurred over a long period of time. In addition, it is necessary to combat the deterioration of the building fabric, which is of particular concern in unoccupied buildings. Non-use, for whatever the reason, frequently demands a much more radical intervention in the World Heritage inventory as time goes on.

However, in addition to this kind of radical intervention there are buildings that are traditionally typified by small floor space. The functional need for larger areas, for example for retail uses, can seek to merge buildings together. Concurrently, there are heritage buildings that are being converted to meet the needs of the elderly and disabled. Accommodating this demographic change can also involve radical intervention in the building fabric. Added to this is the demand to adapt buildings for energy efficiency. In due course, all of the necessary measures taken by property owners¹ and the municipality, as well as the issues arising above and beyond the protection of the buffer zones, must be seen as being reasonable. All of these requirements can normally be achieved but at the cost of using more resources and labour.

The preservation and conservation of a town's historic building heritage can only be effectively carried out if there is clear understanding of the protected structures. It follows that one should be able to categorize the object as an individual building, ensemble, industrial heritage, or traditional landscape. What is to be preserved and conserved is what constitutes the OUV. When considering World Heritage Sites there must be particularly careful deliberation. In formulating an integrated urban development plan it helps to identify the various issues, to process them, and to make decisions that minimise conflict. It is recommended, from the onset, to reach agreement with respective competent state authorities (e.g. state curator) and with monitoring groups from ICOMOS.

2.2. Legal Bases for the Protection of UNESCO World Heritage

Article 4 of the World Heritage Convention of 16 November 1972 stipulates: *“Each State Party to this Convention recognizes [sic] that the duty of ensuring the identification, protection, conservation, presentation and transmission to future generations of the cultural and natural heritage (...) and situated on its territory, belongs primarily to that*

1. Reparation and maintenance feasibility and obligations under state legislation.



City of Bamberg - Old Town Hall (© City of Bamberg)



City of Bergen - Bryggen (© Matthias Ripp)



City of Beemster (© City of Beemster)



City of Berlin - Aerial view of the Modernist Housing Estates (© City of Berlin)

State.” Article 5 stipulates that each State Party to this Convention shall endeavour, in so far as possible, and as appropriate for each country, to adopt a general policy which aims to give the cultural and natural heritage a function in the life of the community and to integrate the protection of that heritage into comprehensive planning programmes. Over and above that, appropriate legal, scientific, technical, administrative and financial measures necessary for the identification, protection, conservation, presentation and rehabilitation of this heritage are to be taken. It is left to each State Party of this Convention to decide what administrative and legal arrangements are made for the protection of the World Heritage.

The area protected at a World Heritage site is secured through a wide range of statutory standards and contracts. At an international level these encompass conventions, charters and continental (e.g. European) agreements. These include the Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict (Hague Convention), the International Charter for the Conservation and Restoration of Monuments and Sites (Venice Charter), the Charter on Historic Gardens (Florence Charter), The European Convention for the Protection of the Architectural Heritage (Granada Convention), the International Charter for the Conservation of Historic Towns and Urban Areas (Washington Charter), Charter for the Protection and Management of the Archaeological Heritage (Lausanne Charter) and the European Convention on the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage (Malta Agreement). A national regulation for each European country complements the protection of heritage sites.

2.3. Financial Issues and UNESCO World Heritage

The financial challenges to preserving World Heritage are extensive and substantial. At the same time they are not easily quantifiable. They reflect the costs and restrictions arising from protecting heritage, which are above and beyond the usual area of protection. A clear distinction has to be made, on the one hand, between the possibility of above-average costs (that have thus far not been addressed in detail) originating from a large number of historic buildings, and on the other hand, the costs of simply having the status of World Heritage.

For the towns that are affected, the requirement to pay particular attention to the preservation of their heritage means that they would face additional financial cost even if they were generally in satisfactory condition. This extra expense (effort) results in more than just the development of traffic plans, immediate restoration measures, or the design of protected properties for which there are specific standards and conditions that

come with the World Heritage designation and go above and beyond the actual heritage designation. What is more, more expensive alternatives are often chosen, for example in the layout of a road, so as to keep the effect of the World Heritage unimpaired (i.e. buffer zones, sight lines) and the World Heritage status preserved.

It is not self-evident that towns are willing and able to protect their architectural heritage and respective environs to the extent required by being World Heritage. It is precisely because a given town does not exclusively benefit from preserving its World Heritage—having to bear its costs alone—that there is the danger of the cultural heritage being only minimally protected. This too depends on the respective municipal cash position, which can vary nationally. It can also depend to some extent on the general societal perspective. From the standpoint of advancing heritage policy, it follows that towns and municipalities be financially enabled, and that the extra financial burden placed upon them by undertaking the State Party’s commitment to preserve World Heritage is recognised. Towns should assume discretionary responsibility for the extended area of heritage protection alongside other voluntary duties.

2.4. Demography and Participation in UNESCO World Heritage Cities

Demographic change due to an ageing population can cause serious issues in historic towns, such as vacant buildings, usage changes, and either alterations or adjustments to infrastructural and transportation systems. In contrast, many regions are anticipating an increase in their populations. These changes continue to grow and impact how municipalities direct their housing plans, how healthcare is managed, or even how commercial districts can be compatible with World Heritage status. In the 21st century, towns must be readily adaptable to the pressures put on by changing societal activities. Particularly in UNESCO World Heritage Cities, the requirements to secure “Outstanding Universal Value” (OUV) over the long term have increased. Safeguarding this mark of distinction is not just an honourable commitment, but a shared responsibility. This responsibility requires an integrated approach that involves all stakeholders (i.e. citizens, property owners, economists, and administrators), to discuss appropriate strategies and measures. It follows that towns be participatory with their partners in anchoring and developing the World Heritage concept, and in protecting sites over the long term. In particular they should reach all generations.



City of Bern (© City of Bern)



City of Rauma (© City of Rauma)



City of Stralsund - Harbour (© City of Stralsund)



City of Luxembourg - Market on Place Guillaume II (© Christof Weber)

2.5. Location factor and economic development

The “UNESCO World Heritage site” brand generates and intensively advertises more than just a positive image to tourists. It also addresses economic interests and people seeking to relocate. In addition to the internationally positive image of World Heritage sites and the respective publications and reports, the marketing and branding of UNESCO World Heritage Cities is in itself contributing to the unique marketing activities of individual towns. Tour operators are not the only agents in this development; so, too, are agents from the retail trade, the hotel industry and the restaurant industry. The network they form should be welcoming and open to innovation. It should involve other industries, service providers, public authorities and neighbouring towns that are tied into the region. Interested people from all walks of life should also be included. In this way a city takes on a holistic view of its history, structure, and special features, as well as its surrounding cultural landscape in a natural context. And a city must act accordingly.

Having World Heritage status can itself bring about positive developments in a town and its environs. This is because the designation has positive connotations. In any event, it fosters significant ‘community’ pride. It attracts people to take up permanent residence, to contribute to the local economy by taking advantage of the economic image of the town, and encourages local people to be proud of their town and to care for it. Consequentially, this promotes more businesses to settle in the town. The influx of people also secures the existing locations of schools and brings about improvements to school facilities--not to mention the programs and services they offer--and, to some extent, the setting up of ancillary facilities. Small and medium-sized enterprises (SME) and trades people, as well as specialists from various disciplines, can prosper and grow in UNESCO World Heritage Cities. This is because the towns commission labour-intensive work on heritage properties, demanding high standards that take into consideration factors of sustainability. Sustainability not only takes into account the quality of materials and workmanship but also the attention given to quality awareness by businesses. Opportunities therefore present themselves for specializing and finding niches in the market. Competitiveness is thereby increased albeit at higher costs. Furthermore, municipalities as well as contractors can draw on the available expertise and on the specialists themselves¹. As a result UNESCO World Heritage Cities can be considered “historical pioneers” or centres of heritage excellence and

1. These trade skills are as a rule found in small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). SMEs are automatically considered part of the long-term protection of UNESCO World Heritage.

innovation. They are in equal measure the guardians of traditions and the laboratories of the future. UNESCO World Heritage Cities present many positive approaches to solutions that can easily be transferred to other historic towns.

It is, therefore, unequivocally important that the populations, the economies (including tourism, see 2.7) and the municipal administrations of UNESCO World Heritage towns exploit the significance of their historic heritage. Of particular note is the UNESCO World Heritage status. It is a mark of distinction that preserves and strengthens the attractiveness of living and making a living (in a heritage town)¹. It also heightens the awareness 'of the heritage town' among tourists, outside companies and around the world.

2.6. New Buildings and Reconstruction

Matters of contemporary architecture and the quality of new urban development are always a subject of controversy in European countries. Similarly, actions ranging from specific changes to the building fabric to demolition itself are heavily debated, whether they be contested or welcomed as necessary. Lost architectural heritage in the form of buildings, urban structures and town views cannot usually be restored after being lost and authenticity is damaged. The increasingly important debates on the reconstruction of lost palaces, town houses or terraces demonstrate perhaps a civic yearning for identity (with that which is familiar) out of which the need for restoring the past is derived—albeit not economically founded. After the Historicism architecture of the 19th century, Post-modern architecture was the first to deviate from contemporary architecture and can now be found everywhere. It is in some way a contradiction to the development of European towns, which have constantly changed, adapted, developed and created something new. Good urban development and new high-quality town architecture have always fostered economic development. They are an expression of prosperity which increase the attractiveness (of place).

UNESCO World Heritage Cities are testaments to past prosperity. They currently satisfy the need for the 'old' to represent itself and as a rule do not call for reconstruction. On the contrary, UNESCO World Heritage Cities require a high-quality, current, building culture, which respects the 'old' while at the same time introducing a new layer of quality to over-layer the old. This serves as a good foundation for opportunity.

I. Quality of life and World Heritage designation : (soft) location factor.



City of Vienna - Museumsquartier
(© MA 18)



City of Warsaw - Royal Castle Square (© Shalom Alechem)



City of Brugge - Canal Rozenhoedkaai
(© Jean-Christophe Benoist)



City of Český Krumlov - View from the Castle (© Rubel)

2.7. Tourism in UNESCO World Heritage Towns

Tourism is a significant positive economic factor to numerous UNESCO World Heritage sites. Worldwide, there is the tendency for some sites to be overused by tourists. Mass tourism can have a negative impact on the integrity of World Heritage sites and their environs. Already at an early stage, the task on hand is to develop sustainable tourism programmes and concepts that low impact, and of high quality, in order to keep UNESCO World Heritage Cities alive and functioning and to ensure that the benefit of tourism contributes to the preservation of the site. Although numerous surveys show that a World Heritage designation does not automatically result in an increase in visitor numbers¹, one can safely say that, because of its exclusivity, the designation provides an additional marketing opportunity, especially in the international arena. It follows that a targeted marketing strategy can have a positive influence on the tourism balance sheet². However, a tourism focus on a historic town can negatively influence established structures. For example, an increase of restaurants and souvenir shops can be detrimental to the retail needs of the local population. Areas that are especially frequented by throngs of tourists are no longer attractive to the locals. This is often seen, for example, in pedestrian zones where flats remain vacant above shops. Even so, the pressure on historic towns continues to grow because of policies (and politics) that aim to strengthen inner cities. Solutions that meet heritage standards and current tourist demands must be seriously discussed. Here, too, the question arises, whether historic towns in their entirety should be drawn into a tourism plan, or if so-called tourism growth axes should be developed to redirect visitors so as to “protect the locals.”

2.8. Climate Change and UNESCO World Heritage Towns

The greatest challenge of our time is adapting to climate change. Its effect on the environment and on intensifying global ecological problems is a matter of serious concern equal to the developments mentioned

1. Cf. Kremer, Dominik; Lehmeier, Holger; Stein, Klaus: *Welterbestätten zwischen normativen Raumbildern und touristischer Wahrnehmung – eine Analyse am Beispiel des UNESCO-Welterbes Bamberg* (World Heritage Sites between normative spatial images and tourist perception – an analysis of the example set by Bamberg’s UNESCO World Heritage), in: Kager, Andreas; Steineck, Albrecht (Eds.): *Kultur als touristischer Standortfaktor. Potentiale – Nutzung – Management*. (Culture as a tourism location factor. Potentials – Use – Management) Paderborn 2011.

2. Studies in Goslar, for example, have shown that a reduction in German day visitors can be compensated by an increase in foreign city-tourists.

earlier. Historic towns, in general, and UNESCO World Heritage Cities, in particular, will have to develop special programmes that protect a significant part of their building fabric, especially those parts which will be vulnerable to increasing natural disasters, such as flooding.

Numerous towns have in the meantime been responding to the concerns arising from debates around climate change and are pursuing climate policies that are environmentally friendly, such as renewable sources of energy, improvements to the transportation system, and others. In order to apply these preventive measures UNESCO World Heritage Cities are required to manage the renewable sources of energy so as to preserve the authenticity and integrity of the site in question. Energy-efficiency upgrades that are compatible with the conservation of the historic building stock place great demands on urban renewal and are often associated with considerably higher costs and a reduction in authenticity. Hence, a careful appraisal of the historic building inventory is required. Further research is needed to find new solutions in regards to construction and material technologies and conservation. The ensuing findings should be centrally managed and easy to use.

2.9. Civil society and the quality of life with UNESCO World Heritage

A prerequisite for the preservation of our common heritage is having a broad, locally based partnership. UNESCO demands that there be participation from civil society, not only in the management plans of previously designated World Heritage sites¹, but also at the application stage, where the respective understanding is that interested citizens and the local economy be involved.

More and more participatory interaction with the public has been required in recent years. The establishment of heritage / planning boards has been introduced in some towns and is recommended. These boards can also take an interdisciplinary approach and actively deal with World Heritage sites. The experience so far has been variable. This only represents the administrative part of involving civil society. More and more often citizens' movements are appearing, demanding, most importantly, for participatory rights. This often involves

1. UNESCO requires that all World Heritage Sites prepare a management plan. This can represent a cross-disciplinary plan of the World Heritage area in which both conservation and also the further development of the World Heritage Site can be ensured. Moreover, integrated cultural heritage management plans in all historic towns can be effective instruments for cultural heritage based development. This method has been tried and tested within the scope of the EU Project HerO (Heritage as Opportunity).



City of Quedlinburg - Schloßberggasse
(© City of Quedlinburg)



City of Rauma (© City of Rauma)



City of Wismar - Harbour (© City of Wismar)



City of Vienna - Ringturm (© MA 18)

petitions for referendums and in some countries referendums themselves. And if these measures prove impossible, mass demonstrations against the urban planning proposals occur. Dealing with citizens' initiatives becomes increasingly difficult when the organized protesters do not represent the public as a whole. It is quite often the case that they represent a conservative subgroup which is averse to contemporary architecture. Protests can be difficult to manage because they often lack credible spokespersons. Their sudden rise translates quite often to protesters not having all the facts, and the speed of protests is increased by the fast exchange of information through social media. Conserving a historic legacy does, however, place a high value on expertise and an awareness of the numerous criteria that go beyond a mere aesthetic evaluation. Even so, the public is basically aware of the concept of World Heritage and regards it positively. As such, the fundamental concept of World Heritage Cities must continually be communicated to the public, and as early as possible. It must be done with as much transparency as possible especially with regard to the processes involved. By doing so, understanding and appreciation can be created for the actions that must later be carried out.

In business scepticism towards conservation can be encountered for reasons mentioned above. However, these are not held in all sectors and branches of the economy. More and more businesses have recently recognised the benefits of realising their business ideas in structurally / spatially historic contexts. This is not only relevant to their business' image, marketing and general business policy, but also to their (business) environment. On-site employees demand a good quality of life. As their expectations for cultural and leisure opportunities increase (in structurally / spatially historic contexts) so, too, do the offerings. An enhanced quality of life benefits all inhabitants of a town.

2.10. The Town's Identity and Identification of its Population with the UNESCO World Heritage

Managing World Heritage involves moderating various, different interests of, for example, administration, business and commerce, tourism and, above all, a diverse and stratified population. The responsibilities around integrative management of World Heritage Sites and the preservation of World Heritage stand at opposite ends but are not to be understood as static systems. Instead, they should be understood as processes. It is precisely when a World Heritage status is granted that the challenge appears. The different requirements and demands that arise from inscription onto the UNESCO list need to be continually negotiated in such a way

that, wherever possible, they all ultimately serve the purpose of preservation but, also, the further development of the heritage. It follows that a connection between shared identity and identification is created, more precisely between the World Heritage, a carrier of identity for the town, and the inhabitant's (civic society's) identification with the heritage.

An increasing number of citizens are migrants to cities—in some cases more than 30% of the population of inner cities. Against this backdrop the question arises, whose heritage is to be safeguarded and how can World Heritage be valued especially by migrants. The rationale for protecting a site as a shared / collective heritage is not easily communicated to migrants and their children. This is also the case with the less well educated, who form the majority of the population. Across the world, the generally satisfactory state of World Heritage sites, as well as the regrettable developments of sites (i.e. the Red List of endangered World Heritage sites or the removal of sites from the World Heritage List) demonstrate that the fate of World Heritage sites is not decided by the designations of the international community, but rather by actors at the local level. Consequently, one of the important tasks that a town has is to communicate the World Heritage concept and the value of respective sites to all locally interested parties, in addition to involving them in relevant decision making. Envisioning and shaping the future of a shared heritage will be integral to its survival. And it follows, that citizens with migrant backgrounds be acknowledged as a complementary cultural factor and be given appropriate consideration. Only when these various and different interests are successfully integrated into urban society, can UNESCO World Heritage sites and other monumental buildings be sustainably safeguarded¹ over the long term.

1. Here, sustainability is understood according to the definition of the Brundtland Commission, with a particular focus at this point on the needs of future generations: *“Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”*. (Source: United Nations website on the Decade of Education for Sustainable Development 2005-2014).



City of Bergen - Old Brygge Buildings (© Gerd A.T. Mueller)



City of Berlin - Museumsinsel Panorama (© Thomas Quine - Flickr Creative Commons Licence)

CONCLUSION

The opportunities that present themselves to World Heritage Cities are apparent. The public yearns for historic cityscapes, urban views and structures due to an ever growing sense of loss of the historic building fabric that has resulted from war and redevelopment. This is further associated with the loss of a town's identity and unique character. The means by which these yearned values could be preserved in World Heritage sites potentially include: communicating the World Heritage concept (already done in schools), accounting for the needs of the whole population, involving the public in project planning right from the start, and setting up discussion platforms that enable constructive debate and participation.

Because there is a growing tendency for the population to be interested in history, and that this growth has seemingly improved the market opportunities for a number of companies in World Heritage Cities, the possibility of economic support has, thereby, also improved. In addition, there is greater social acceptance of considering sustainability and that the maintenance of historical monuments adheres to this requirement. The economy is 'witnessing' the development of a historical monument cluster.

Only by recognising and being willing to protect and to extrapolate the uniqueness and authenticity of a World Heritage site can its extraordinary worldwide significance be preserved.



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