



Recommendation 591 (1970)¹

Venice, its preservation and rehabilitation

Parliamentary Assembly

The Assembly,

1. Considering the grave threats, both natural and man-made to the existence of Venice ;
2. Observing particularly that the age-old and well-known physical phenomena of the slow subsidence of the soil and the gradual and inexorable rise of the sea level are becoming continually more and more serious and widespread under the insidious effect of the hydrological imbalances in the Venice lagoon, mainly caused by the action of man ;
3. Noting that those factors are combined with the catastrophic effects of humidity and atmospheric pollution causing "stone disease" and the deterioration of paintings, the whole threatening the historical and artistic centre of Venice at least as much as the alternating action of the lagoon currents in undermining the foundations of historical and other buildings ;
4. Whereas all these threats, together with the prevailing sense of uncertainty about the future which they arouse, are in large measure responsible for the generally poor housing conditions in the city and its lack of a communications infrastructure, which in turn engender an emigratory movement towards the mainland, with the consequent long-term risk of turning Venice into a museum ;
5. Whereas it is not enough merely to save Venice from the waters and to preserve it from other menacing factors, both natural and artificial : the city must also be infused with new life, by being given an economic and social function, and by the development of its cultural and artistic vocation ;
6. Welcoming the efforts already made by the Italian Government, in particular the allocation of 6 million dollars towards a study of local geophysical problems, and expressing similar appreciation of the excellent preservation plan for Venice devised by UNESCO, particularly in its concern to catalogue and evaluate the monuments, palaces and works of art and arrive at a better understanding of the hydrography of the lagoon, the sea currents, the phenomena of soil mechanics and hydrobiological influences - all of which are an essential prerequisite for any preservation campaign ;
7. Observing that from studies and research carried out to date, on both a national and an international plane, it may be inferred that the moment has come when man is capable of finding a solution to the extraordinarily complex scientific and technological problems posed by the preservation of Venice,
8. Recommends that the Committee of Ministers :
 - a. invite member governments to make available to UNESCO the experts it needs with a view to the preparation, in conjunction with the Italian authorities, of an overall plan for the preservation and revitalisation of Venice ;
 - b. invite member governments to make special financial contributions to UNESCO, in a spirit of European solidarity, for allocation to that organisation's programme for Venice.

1. Assembly debate on 26 January 1970 (21st Sitting) (see [Doc. 2713](#), report of the Committee on Culture and Education). Text adopted by the Assembly on 26 January 1970 (21st Sitting).

