



Resolution 598 (1975)¹

Social aspects of architectural conservation

Parliamentary Assembly

The Assembly,

1. Considering the report of its Committee on Culture and Education on the social aspects of architectural conservation ([doc. 3650](#)) ;
2. Recalling its concern for the preservation of the European architectural heritage as a contribution to the cultural enrichment and enjoyment of the lives of present and future generations ;
3. Noting that historic sectors of old towns and villages, with their individual identities and sense of community life, constitute one of the most important and direct sources of such enrichment ;
4. Aware however that the social problems of such areas are no less significant than the material problems posed by their present state of dilapidation ;
5. Convinced, therefore, that the material restoration or preservation of these areas cannot be separated from the maintenance or rehabilitation of a social balance in them ;
6. Believing that as wide a range of classes as possible should be represented in the social fabric of each individual historic sector, in order that such sectors should retain a living structure and be assured proper cultural and domestic amenities ;
7. Recognising the cultural value of the traditional population of the historic parts of towns, and distinguishing this from more recent transient or accidental occupation (usually, though not always, by people of low-income groups) attracted by the reduced costs of living in what has become dilapidated housing ;
8. Wishing to find a means of reconciling the cultural value to the general public of historic sectors with the social needs of those, inevitably a minority of the total population, who may happen to occupy them ;
9. Believing that the aim of conservation is not only to conserve the cultural value of the material fabric, but also to ensure the possibility of a continued living community in historic areas ;
10. Sensitive to the dangers of manipulation of the social fabric of conservation areas, and therefore reluctant to seek to impose a categorical pattern, but believing that each area should be considered separately and its own individual characteristics taken into account ;
11. Regarding property speculation as an antisocial phenomenon, that contributes only very rarely to the successful rehabilitation of historic sectors and therefore requires the utmost care on the part of those authorities planning the restoration of such areas ;
12. Feeling that new legislative and other measures are necessary to provide more funds for the maintenance and rehabilitation of historic sectors, but considering that the form of financial assistance (tax relief or subsidy) that is given towards the restoration of historic buildings in private ownership should take account of the status of the recipient (both his financial means and whether he be tenant or owner occupier) ;

1. Assembly debate on 1 October 1975 (9th Sitting) (see [Doc. 3650](#), report of the Committee on Culture and Education). Text adopted by the Assembly on 1 October 1975 (9th Sitting).



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13. Noting the work on the social aspect of conservation carried out by the intergovernmental Committee on Monuments and Sites, and in particular the results of its symposia held in 1974 and 1975 at Edinburgh, Bologna and Krems, and hoping that this aspect will figure prominently in the report to be produced by the intergovernmental committee on the results of European Architectural Heritage Year,

14. Proposes to give due emphasis to this social aspect when considering suitable parliamentary action to follow up European Architectural Heritage Year 1975.