



## Resolution 1981 (2014)<sup>1</sup>

Final version

# Europe's endangered heritage

Parliamentary Assembly

1. The Parliamentary Assembly recalls that culture and heritage play a fundamental role in upholding democratic values and building citizenship: they embed cultural identity, deepen understanding and respect for others, and nurture respect for cultural diversity.
2. Citizen participation and non-governmental initiatives are crucial drivers for protecting endangered heritage. Awareness raising and education about the value of cultural heritage for society are essential to get citizens involved in projects for its conservation as well as its continuous use as a "living heritage". The Assembly therefore stresses the need to build a stronger link between education and heritage, with a view to engaging people, especially young people, with their history and culture.
3. Moreover, the Assembly believes that economic development and the protection of heritage are not in contradiction. Numerous examples show that investments made in heritage conservation can make a significant contribution to economic and social development. However, new innovative mechanisms and partnerships are needed to achieve those goals more effectively and more systematically.
4. The Assembly therefore underlines that heritage conservation needs long-term integrated strategies and coherent policies, including investment plans, which should take account not only of the costs of heritage conservation projects, but also of the potential of heritage conservation as a key element in socio-economic regeneration projects and of its democratic value for society.
5. Accordingly, the Assembly recommends that the member States of the Council of Europe:
  - 5.1. concerning strategy and policy design:
    - 5.1.1. sign and ratify the Council of Europe Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society (CETS No. 199, "Faro Convention") and the European Landscape Convention (ETS No. 176) if they have not yet done so, and develop national strategies which take into account the protection and use of the cultural heritage according to the principles laid down in these conventions;
    - 5.1.2. conduct national surveys of heritage under statutory protection to identify endangered heritage, establish priorities for action, decide upon the most relevant action for each heritage site and help direct resources to where they are most needed, bearing in mind the right balance between monuments of architectural/historic value and smaller heritage sites of value to the community;
    - 5.1.3. mainstream heritage protection into decision making in relation to planning and policy, at national, regional and local level, include "heritage impact assessment" alongside environmental impact assessment and use heritage as a key element in socio-economic regeneration projects;

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1. *Text adopted by the Standing Committee, acting on behalf of the Assembly, on 7 March 2014 (see [Doc. 13428](#), report of the Committee on Culture, Science, Education and Media, rapporteur: Ms Vesna Marjanović).*

See also [Recommendation 2038 \(2014\)](#).



5.1.4. where feasible, conduct targeted regional surveys to also consider heritage which is not yet under statutory protection in order to identify endangered heritage sites of value for the local community which could be included in regional development plans;

5.1.5. introduce regular reporting in national parliaments on initiatives undertaken to safeguard endangered heritage and engage with the Council of Europe, the European Union and UNESCO to harmonise data related to endangered heritage and share best practice and knowledge;

5.1.6. encourage co-operation between the ministries responsible for heritage and for education with a view to raising awareness of young people of the value of heritage and help them to strengthen their cultural understanding and democratic citizenship based on lessons learnt from heritage and experiences of democracy and human exchanges based on the interpretation of heritage;

5.1.7. develop integrated and innovative heritage-led strategies for the protection of monuments and historic towns and local and regional development using the Council of Europe's guidance and methodologies, as developed within the framework of the Technical Co-operation and Consultancy Programme related to the integrated conservation of the cultural heritage, the UNESCO Historic Urban Landscape initiative and the experience shared within the European Association of Historic Towns and Regions (EAHTR);

5.2. concerning policy implementation:

5.2.1. review the appropriate level for decision making concerning heritage in danger to ensure coherence between national, regional and local levels, which is an important issue particularly in decentralised States;

5.2.2. improve co-ordination between government institutions, local authorities, heritage institutions, museums, academies and other partners to overcome "deadlock situations" associated with endangered heritage, often due to complex legal and ownership issues;

5.2.3. ensure regular inspection of heritage sites (using also digital technology) and harmonise data and relevant information gathering to monitor change and identify problems in order to facilitate regular maintenance;

5.2.4. review standards and guidelines for heritage maintenance, conservation, restoration and rehabilitation as a practical approach to managing change (appropriate materials and techniques), and provide tailored training for project and site management;

5.3. concerning financial and technical support:

5.3.1. ensure a level playing field between the conservation and the construction sectors and introduce financial incentives for conservation and restoration projects, such as tax reductions, soft loans, insurance premiums and support to owners to help them face extra costs due to specific heritage requirements and fees of accredited professionals;

5.3.2. pool knowledge and know-how in crafts and conservation skills, including scientific analysis, digital recording of heritage and project management;

5.3.3. develop training programmes for professionals in different sectors and share good practice in urban regeneration projects, community engagement, use of economic tools, etc;

5.3.4. give recognition to and support the activities of heritage conservation groups working at national and local level.

6. The Assembly invites the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe to promote co-operation, exchange of expertise and practical experience between local and regional authorities, in order to better safeguard endangered heritage.