THE POLITICS
OF HERITAGE REGENERATION
IN SOUTH-EAST EUROPE

THE POLITICS
OF HERITAGE REGENERATION
IN SOUTH-EAST EUROPE

John Bold
and
Martin Cherry
(eds)

Council of Europe

Contents

Foreword

The way Europe's cultural heritage is managed is important. Done well, it can help societies weather all manner of crises, rebuild trust in divided communities, stimulate local economies and improve quality of life.

This is the rationale behind the "Ljubljana Process: rehabilitating our common heritage", a joint Council of Europe–European Commission initiative, which has been running in South-East Europe since 2003. And it is encouraging to note that recent opinion polls confirm that there is public support for the use of cultural heritage in conflict resolution.

This book is the third in a series of volumes about the Ljubljana Process. It provides analyses from some of the international experts involved in the project, some since its inception. It identifies progress, but also acknowledges issues that still need to be resolved; some are legal and administrative, others, matters of co-ordination.

From the beginning, the Ljubljana Process has aimed to go beyond administrative reform and capacity building, important though these are. The ultimate aim is to help the countries of South-East Europe unlock the potential of the region's rich cultural heritage, to accelerate the development of democratic, peaceful and open societies with the active engagement of all citizens, without compromising the special character and cultural value of the historic environment itself.

The economic crisis has made heritage-led development more urgent and underlined the need to reduce the dependency of heritage protection on public funding. Today, the unprecedented migration crisis means that issues of solidarity, mutual understanding and dialogue are even more pressing.

Based on the experience of those involved, this book argues that there should be a greater sharing of responsibility for the identification and future planning of the historic environment between public bodies, local communities, voluntary organisations and individual citizens to create a greater sense of shared ownership.

I thank the many specialists who have contributed to the Ljubljana Process and, in particular, the authors of this book, whose insights will help inform our European Cultural Heritage Strategy for the 21st Century.

Snezana Samardzic-Markovic
Director General
Directorate General of Democracy (DG II)

Introduction

Martin Cherry

The collapse of the former communist states in South-East Europe and the wars and disruption that followed presented a challenge to the Council of Europe: how best to promote its core principles – the protection of human rights, the consolidation of democratic stability, the promotion of European cultural identity and social cohesion and the rights of all, irrespective of religion, ethnicity and nationality – in the field of cultural heritage protection? The internationally funded programmes that are the subject of this book were designed initially to support those ministries and institutions in the region that were responsible for the protection of immovable cultural heritage (buildings, monuments and sites of outstanding historic, archaeological, architectural or artistic importance) in revising legislation and developing policy to conform with international standards and good practice. Central to the brief was a commitment to the cultural heritage as being fundamental to the building of national and European identities. While it was busy winning over the hearts and minds of politicians and practitioners in the region, the Council of Europe, like other players in the heritage sector, was forced to adapt and rethink its own objectives and priorities in what was a fast-changing environment. A programme that set out at first to help build institutional capacity soon needed to address a more complex set of issues. The most compelling of these was how to exploit the potential of key monuments in the region in such a way that they would help revitalise the local economy and improve local people's standard of living without compromising the monuments' intrinsic cultural value; how, at a time of severe economic crisis, when traditional public resources were severely strained, to finance the rehabilitation of these monuments from the private as well as the public sectors; and how, in countries where civil society is poorly developed, to win public support for the conservation of historic and archaeological monuments and at the same time take into account local community views of significance in heritage policy making.

In 2003, the European Commission and the Council of Europe launched the Regional Programme on Cultural and Natural Heritage in South East Europe (RPSEE), a joint initiative with nine partners in South-East Europe – Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia, "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia"[1] and Kosovo.[2] With its three elements (institutional capacity building, heritage rehabilitation and local development), it was directed at contributing to peace and reconciliation in the region. The second component of the programme, the Integrated Rehabilitation Project Plan/Survey of the Architectural and Archaeological Heritage (IRPP/SAAH operated from 2003 to 2010. Its cumbersome title at least had the merit of describing what it intended to do. This was to establish transferable methodologies for heritage-led rehabilitation in these countries, all of which were undergoing political, social and economic transition, and to persuade conservation and planning professionals and – equally if not more importantly – politicians in the region, that the protection of important historic sites and monuments could be integrated into the wider process of economic and social revitalisation. The project has had significant financial impact, attracting over 76 million euros of grant aid by the end of 2010. Over 80% of the 186 key sites selected by specialists from within the region to be part of the project had undergone or were undergoing some level of rehabilitation.

The IRPP/SAAH worked on the premise that careful and sustainable heritage management can stimulate local economies and improve the quality of life of local communities without compromising the character and cultural value of monuments – that is, the qualities that make them so special in the first place. Although the evidence needs to be treated with care, experience worldwide, attested by much specialist literature, confirms that the rehabilitation of historic monuments can help create jobs, lead to improvements in infrastructure, bring redundant spaces back into use and rekindle local pride in the historic environment (see Chapter 3.5 for an overview of the literature and the difficulties of obtaining reliable data in the region; and, for a more sceptical view, Chapter 4.1). Supported throughout by the Forum of the Heads of State of South-East Europe, the project received a new lease of life and funding in 2008 when the Conference of Ministers of Culture met at Ljubljana under the auspices of the Slovenian Presidency of the European Union (EU). It also received a new name: the "Ljubljana Process: Rehabilitating our Common Heritage". Ministers recognised that heritage sites were, or could be, assets – part of the solution rather than an obstacle to economic development. Since its inception, the IRPP/SAAH had focused on the peculiar challenges of funding monuments and historic ensembles during a period of radical economic transition, from a command to a market economy. The Ljubljana Process was launched, with a combination of optimism and determination, just as the economic crisis broke. This injected a greater degree of urgency into finding imaginative solutions to raising funds, accelerating the need to move away from a dependency on public funding (whether local government, state or international) towards seeking (or rather bidding for) private investment in a free-market environment where the heritage is one competitive element among many.

With a new sense of realpolitik, ministers of culture, at a conference held in Cetinje in 2010, confirmed their decision to implement the programme, which received the final tweak of its name to Ljubljana Process II. This book takes stock of the situation five years into this new phase of the programme, which was managed neither by the Council of Europe nor the EU, but by the member states. It is written by members of the Council of Europe expert team, some of whom have been involved in the project from the start. Part 1 looks at the context within which the IRPP/SAAH was launched in

2003; Part 2 moves on to describe the processes and principles that underpinned the programme in both its IRPP/SAAH and Ljubljana phases; Part 3 reflects on the challenges, opportunities and effectiveness of the programme; and Part 4 teases out some of the key issues that have emerged and suggests how these might help identify operational policies over the next five to 10 years. Although our book is necessarily an outsiders' view, it could not have been written without the engagement and commitment of the many conservation professionals and administrators from the region itself who owned the programme and without whom nothing could have happened. Ideally this study needs to be read alongside two others that together will bring the whole process into sharper focus. *Heritage for Development in South-East Europe* (Rikolović and Mikić 2014) provides a comprehensive view from the region of the impact of the Ljubljana Process – on management, policy and perceptions – and *The wider benefits of investment in cultural heritage* (Bartlett et al. 2015), a collaboration between the London School of Economics and Political Science and regional specialists, measures the broader economic and social impact of heritage rehabilitation in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia, as far as it is possible at this early stage, and provides pointers as to how best to monitor progress in the future as more solid information comes to hand.

The nine territories that were partners in the Ljubljana Process occupy a land mass of around 614 000 square kilometres and have a combined population of a little over 48 million – roughly equivalent to that of France, Belgium and the Netherlands in terms of area, but almost exactly half in terms of population. They are often dismissively placed in the terminological basket, "The Balkans". This, along with the pejorative term "Balkanisation", carries negative connotations – of fragmentation, the construction of barriers, instability and violence – and, more recently, of economic collapse and general misery. Such stereotyping is neither wholly accurate nor helpful and the term is not generally used in this book. In any case, as Misha Glenny observes, "a consensus has never been found" regarding what is meant by "Balkan". The difficulty of definition "arises from the conflation of political and geographical descriptions that are themselves problematic" (Glenny 1999: xxii). Indeed, the peninsula as an entity had no name until the early 19th century (Jezernik 2004: 23). More often than not, the use of the term says more about outsiders' prejudices than internal realities: "the Balkans have served as a repository of negative characteristics against which a positive and self-congratulatory image of 'European' and the 'West' has been constructed" (Todorova 1997: 188). Even the term "Western Balkans", that enjoyed a short-lived respectability before "South-East Europe" became politically correct, quickly assumed the special connotation of being a "purgatorial house of correction one dwells in before being granted entry to 'Europe'" – better perhaps than the "double banishment" to the "*Southern* Balkans": Macedonia sits rather unhappily between the two (Goldsworthy 2013: xi). The Balkans is sometimes taken to include Romania and not infrequently extends to take in Greece and Turkey, neither of whom is happy with the sobriquet. Most authorities that use the term as a working shorthand include different countries in the region to suit their own purpose. It is a moving feast: The Balkan Trust for Democracy – hoping to keep everyone on board – includes all of the countries that concern us (including Kosovo), while the International Crisis Group – hoping to lose rather than gain countries from its remit – focuses on Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia and Kosovo with watching briefs on "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia", Albania, Croatia and Montenegro, "where the risk of conflict has decreased but not disappeared" (Balkan Trust for Democracy at www.gmfus.org/civil-society/balkan-trust-democracy; International Crisis Group, at www.crisisgroup.org/en/regions/europe/balkans.aspx).

The region's diversity of cultural heritage monuments is enormous in terms of both range and quality – the rock paintings of Besarabi; the Palace of Diocletian at Split; the Ottoman towns of Berat and Gjirokastra with their mosques and Byzantine churches; the bridges of Mostar and Visegrad; the monasteries of Sopoćani and Kosovo; the painted churches of northern Moldavia (Romania), all of

them UNESCO World Heritage Sites, of which there are 29 in the region – with many in the pipeline on the tentative lists. Over 54 000 architectural and archaeological monuments, many of them complex groups and ensembles, are formally protected, a small proportion of those that are known to survive. (This is covered in more detail in Chapter 4.2.) But such lists as these in themselves mean very little. They do not convey any sense of a distinctively Balkan cultural heritage, although much is shared within the region as well as beyond – whether it be extraordinary funerary monuments such as the *stećci* of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia and Croatia; vernacular house types; Roman, Byzantine and Islamic monuments; or 19th- and 20th-century industrial complexes – sites that respond variously to the minute variation of local administration or lordship, local economies and drift geology as well as to the continental influences of empires, ecclesiastical institutions and international trade.

What does give some degree of homogeneity to these countries is that they have been subject to such a wide range of distinct ethnic, religious and political currents in their recent shared history: their experience of communist regimes and the repercussions of the collapse of those regimes. Even so, as Will Bartlett makes clear in Chapter 1.2, "shared" is not an entirely apposite word: while Serbia, Croatia, "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia" and Bosnia and Herzegovina together comprised the former Yugoslavia (although each enjoyed a different status within it that would determine their various responses to the events unleashed in 1989), Romania and Bulgaria lay beyond the Iron Curtain and Albania pursued its own eccentric solitary path towards socialism. The more distant, partially shared, history – as part of the Roman Empire, of the Christian world, of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, of the Muslim world and the Ottoman Empire – has tended to exacerbate tensions, not least since 1989, a period that has witnessed the development of "biased and one-sided views of the cultural heritage that often fail to take account of the context within which cultural heritage emerged" (Bartlett) and hardly promote a favourable attitude towards the culture of the "other".

The collapse of communism and the meltdown that followed required a rapid and co-ordinated response on the part of agencies tasked with helping to rebuild democracy in the region based on the rule of law and respect for human rights. The progress made in the field of cultural heritage through the medium of protocols, conventions, recommendations, resolutions, processes and so forth – documented by John Bold and Robert Pickard in Chapter 2.1 – went a long way to securing sign-up at a high political level, but the impact of these in some of the more intractable areas, such as social cohesion, conflict resolution and the fight against organised crime remains something of an ongoing quest. Many of the long-term problems besetting the historic built environment, while undoubtedly systemic, are not legacies peculiar to communist regimes. Weak planning and the lack of effective controls and sanctions, tax evasion and corruption or a poorly developed civil society are widely prevalent, within as well as outside the European Union. As Chapter 1.3 suggests, issues such as the cumulative impact of long-term neglect, of economic policies that encouraged the bur-geoning of cities and the depopulation of the countryside, or of heritage protection regimes that favoured individual monuments over historic landscapes, are not exclusive to South-East Europe. The concentration of the IRPP/SAAH at first on institutional reform and capacity building, together with a top-down approach that insisted that all the programme partners proceeded along the same lines and at the same pace, diverted attention away from their individual complexities and special needs and, in the case of non-governmental organisations (NGOs), made some potentially fruitful co-operation difficult to achieve. The Heritage Assessment Reports, drawn up for each country, highlight the considerable divergence of experience between them in terms of legislation and policy making regarding the cultural heritage. Robert Pickard's careful examination of this evidence (Chapter 3.3) indicates, among many other things, how inadequately the key principles of sustainable

rehabilitation in the field of historic monuments protection percolated down to those responsible for carrying out new policies – a factor exacerbated in the heritage ministries and institutions by the leaching of young talent into the private sector.

The IRPP/SAAH and Ljubljana Process reflected and at the same time fed into changing attitudes towards the management and rehabilitation of heritage sites, changes that were both rapid and deep. As Bold and Pickard suggest (in Chapter 2.1, which examines the principles and methodologies underpinning the programmes), "placing the heritage as a function of democratic participation and human rights in the forefront of an initiative that was directed towards rehabilitation was a bold and inspiring move." Even though, at first, activity necessarily focused on establishing sound conservation techniques and management structures for the sites selected by the participating countries, conservation had been recognised from the beginning as a means of promoting socio-economic development. Realising the potential economic and social benefits of urban rehabilitation had been at the heart of the Council of Europe's action plan for the regeneration of Tbilisi (1998-2001 in partnership with the Georgian Government and the World Bank). In many ways, as Bold and Pickard argue, the IRPP/SAAH programme anticipated some of the key objectives of the Council of Europe Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society (Faro Convention) insofar as it married the objective of promoting the diversity of the region's cultural heritage as a means of achieving more cohesive societies with the objective of developing it sustainably for the long-term economic benefit of local communities.

Demonstrating the positive impacts of the sustainable rehabilitation of historic sites and monuments has created a challenge for the IRPP/SAAH and Ljubljana programmes. Measuring impacts in this field "is problematic and the 'evidence' is seldom robust" (Evans 2005, quoted in Chapter 3.1), a problem exacerbated in a region in a state of political and economic flux where the concept of heritage-led regeneration was little understood and the data for impact assessment virtually non-existent, at least in the early years. As Bold argues in this chapter, "evidential, historical, aesthetic and communal … values are not susceptible to ready measurement but we must guard against the sentimentality which sees values everywhere". Politicians in particular, but funders generally too, seek the comfort of clear financial evidence and robust projections to justify investment in heritage sites. Gradually such evidence is accumulating in the region, but most comparative statistics on the benefits of heritage regeneration are still drawn from outside. Chapter 3.2 shows how extensive partnership funding has been, but it has come in the main from public sources, the largest of these being the EU. There are three areas that need urgent attention if investment in the sector is to increase and its sources diversified. First, argues Nancy McGrath and John Baguley in Chapter 3.5, is to adopt the culture of business planning based on "detailed analysis, rigorous thinking, and reasoned argument" in order to strengthen project management and convince potential investors that there is a case worth funding. The second is to develop fundraising techniques that set up sustainable income streams and avoid dependency on one-off grants. Then, in order to underpin these activities, the wider benefits of heritage investment need to be established: at present the evidence base for the region is small but growing and Will Bartlett assesses the scale of the task in Chapter 3.5 (along with Bartlett et al. 2015) and proposes the development of methodologies to help build the information bank that is currently missing.

Poor levels of liaison and co-ordination between institutes and ministries have bedevilled the integration of conservation projects (that have the potential to help regenerate historic towns and countryside) into the mainstream programmes of those ministries with the most muscle, such as economic development and regional planning. The Council of Europe Heritage Assessment Reports (HARs) were established in recognition of the fact that these big issues were really about how the

state was run and that they needed to be tackled head-on if the potential of heritage regeneration was to be released. Analysed by Robert Pickard in Chapter 3.3, these are hard-hitting reports that document structural fault lines as well as significant reforms. Both Pickard and (in Chapter 3.4) David Johnson find disturbing signs that heritage and conservation management remain isolated from the other key environmental players, as well as being semi-detached from the mainstream of European good practice. Impeccable legislation is of little use when corruption and the failure to conform to planning requirements go unchecked. And at the grass roots, inadequate training and the difficulties of maintaining continuity of high-calibre personnel at project management level make it difficult to build on success. The various stages of the Ljubljana Process – from the initial prioritisation assessments to feasibility and business planning – are much more likely to succeed if the top-level issues highlighted by the HARs are tackled in parallel. What might be called the "Ljubljana total package" of initiatives that helps a global view to be achieved is eminently transferable and, for instance, forms the basis of the Kyiv Initiative that focuses on historic towns in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine.

The Kyiv Initiative, while enshrining best Ljubljana Process principles and practice, breaks new ground, in that it is substantially spatially driven: digital mapping is the key management tool allowing the whole gamut of values and constraints to be assessed simultaneously – or at least as part of the same exercise. Indispensable for urban planning, this map-based methodology also marks a conceptual departure from the traditional single monument-led approach of the IRPP/SAAH in the early days. The concentration in participating countries on the single monument derives in part from an old established, indeed august, inventory approach that demands intensive research and recording. This may form a sound basis for repair and maintenance (if the crafts skills exist to carry these out) but it is a poor foundation upon which to capture and assess the relative significance of all the monuments in a region or country – the prerequisite for a proportionate statutory protection system (see chapters 3.1. and 4.2). As a planning tool, inventory-based records are cumbersome and often counter-productive. (These defects together with the opportunities presented by landscape and area approaches to heritage assessment are explored further in Chapter 4.2.) If the "valorisation and preservation of heritage [are to be] part of broader long-term development plans", as an important EC communication urged they should be (EC 2014), then the "listing" of outstanding cultural monuments needs to be made much smarter. "Listing" is time-consuming and resource-hungry (for comparative figures regarding South-East Europe, see Chapter 4.2). In England there are in excess of half a million protected listed buildings and protected archaeological sites – and this excludes areas of special conservation value; in Italy it is estimated that 50% by area of the country is protected by heritage legislation; Germany boasts 1.3 million protected sites (each containing many individual components) and 250 000 specific listed buildings in addition. Are these levels of heritage protection sustainable? It may be that the partner countries of the Ljubljana Process should explore less intensive and less costly valorisation programmes that focus on areas or types of buildings or sites that are under threat, on historic areas that are undergoing rapid development or on areas that possess special sensitivity and, possibly, tourism potential – in other words, focus assessment and regeneration where there is an urgent need to balance conservation and economic development needs, or where there is a strong local demand, or a demonstrable justification on grounds of natural justice, for such action.

There are many competing, sometimes conflicting, views as to what comprises our shared and cherished inheritance (which Bold examines in Chapter 4.1), and this complexity has to be reflected in public policy. More and more, in Western Europe and the US – but also in South-East Europe where, admittedly, civil society is less well developed – community values are assuming equal weight to expert values as to what is significant. It has become far more difficult to justify monuments as icons

invested with mystical (also known as expertly determined) status and somehow detached from real life. As John Bold argues in this book, heritage "does not stand alone as a collection of isolated artefacts which serve only to sentimentalise the past and present an inconvenient barrier to progress." Despite the many shortcomings and challenges facing the region in the field of cultural heritage, the present situation, so often characterised in terms of austerity and the erosion of the quality of life, should be seen as an opportunity: an opportunity to use the lessons learned from the IRPP/SAAH and the Ljubljana Process to avoid some of the traps laid by the cumulative and sometimes inconsistent heritage protection legislation of the past 60 years, and focus heritage policies in such a way that they address the central issues facing society in the 21st century.

References

EC (2014) European Commission (2014), "Towards an integrated approach to cultural heritage for Europe" [Brussels, COM(2014) 477 final at http://ec.europa.eu/culture/library/publications/2014-heritage-communication_en.pdf, accessed 12/09/2015].

Glenny M. (1999), *The Balkans, 1804-1999. Nationalism, War and the Great Powers*, Granta Books, London.

Goldsworthy V. (2013), *Inventing Ruritania. The Imperialism of the Imagination* (2nd edn), Hurst, London.

Jezernik B. (2004), *Wild Europe. The Balkans in the Gaze of Western Travellers*, Saqi Books, London (in association with the Bosnian Institute).

Todorova M. (1997), *Imagining the Balkans*, Oxford University Press, Oxford.

Part One

Background

Chapter 1.1

The technical co-operation programme: context and evolution

John Bold

*T*he activities initiated through the Technical Co-operation programme have been a mainstay of Council of Europe cultural heritage policy and practice since the mid-1970s. The Ljubljana Process in South-East Europe has been the most ambitious of all such activities to date. The context and evolution of the integrated conservation strategy are here described, as the Technical Co-operation programme continues to demonstrate and promote the instrumental potential of cultural heritage in the maintenance and continuing development of European democratic culture.

Meeting in Namur, Belgium, in April 2015, the Sixth Conference of Ministers of the Council of Europe responsible for Cultural Heritage resolved "to continue and intensify their co-operation in order to provide responses that meet with the challenges facing the conservation, enhancement and use of heritage as a fundamental right at the beginning of the 21st century". Predicated on the recognition of the enormous challenges facing our societies (climate change, demographic changes, migration, political, economic, financial and social crises), the Namur Declaration has reaffirmed the centrality of cultural heritage as a key component of European identity and called for a strategy for its redefinition in response to these challenges, calling for a vision and framework for the next 10 years (Council of Europe 2015a). Such a vision, with consequent actions and projects, will necessarily be looking forward, but will represent a continuation rather than a fresh start. Cultural heritage, rooted in the core values of the Council of Europe (see Chapter 2.1) – a common heritage for which we have a common responsibility (Council of Europe 1954 and 2005) – is recognised in the year of the 40th anniversary of the European Charter of the Architectural Heritage as a unique resource and fundamental component of democratic society. Forty years of conventions, declarations, recommendations and actions have both initiated and reflected a profound evolution in attitudes to the heritage across Europe so that now, in co-operation with the European Union and other national and international actors, the Council of Europe intends further to address its operational priorities for the cultural heritage in the context of unifying and consensual themes: citizenship, societies, the economy, knowledge, territorial governance and sustainable development. These will be implemented utilising the available tools and instruments – not only the conventions, databases, networks and so on which have informed practice to date, but also the "Technical Co-operation and Consultancy Programme related to the integrated conservation of the cultural heritage". It is this programme, in operation now for 40 years, and responsible for the implementation of the major project described in this book, which has the accumulated experience and expertise, as well as the ambition, to continue articulating and defending the fundamental role of cultural heritage in society, and moreover supporting the development of the "democratic culture" identified in a recent substantial report by the Secretary General of the Council of Europe as crucial in combating the current challenges posed by the fallout of the economic crisis and the rise of populism and extremism (Council of Europe 2015b: 75).

Since the mid-1970s, the Technical Co-operation and Consultancy Programme (initially known as Technical Assistance) has advised national authorities and practitioners on a very wide range of issues relating to the conservation, rehabilitation, enhancement and management of the cultural and natural heritage, at national, regional and local levels. A small staff has successfully identified and harnessed the skills of almost 600 experts, to produce over 1 200 assessments within over 128 projects: from the conservation of the Pont du Gard and the floor of the Cathedral of St John, Valletta, to the creation of heritage-management systems in Cyprus and Malta; from advising on heritage policy within the Baltic States, Croatia and Belarus to making recommendations on the conservation of numerous historic centres, including Segovia, Valencia, Funchal, Cracow and Telc (Council of Europe 2010a). At least 40 projects have been directly concerned with urban rehabilitation. This programme, prompted by individual national needs, and informed by the Council of Europe's conventions, charters and recommendations, has played a major role in contributing to the establishment of a cultural heritage sector in the Council of Europe as the principal European promoter of the theory and best practice of heritage protection and management. The scope of the programme is wide-ranging in interpretation and application. It is regarded as an instrument for strengthening social cohesion while respecting and celebrating diversity, informed by the broader guiding principles of developing democracy, defending human rights and advancing the rule of law. The organisation has become the moral conscience of the European cultural heritage, with an impact acknowledged as being out of proportion to its size: the Council of Europe "has become adept at working with the grain of developing sectoral trends, whilst challenging member countries to move forward more quickly from ideas to principles and from principles to rights" (Fojut 2004: 4). Currently, 47 member states are the potential beneficiaries of its actions.

The "Rules for Technical Assistance relating to the Integrated Conservation of the Cultural Heritage of Monuments and Sites" were adopted by the Council of Europe's Committee of Ministers in October 1973. Assistance was to be directed towards the conservation and revival of monuments and sites as an integral part of regional development plans. It was made clear that assistance would be for integrated conservation projects – projects that tackled all the challenges inherent in striking a balance between the sensitive conservation and improvement of old districts and the enhancement of local economies and quality of life, with a view to integrating historic fabric usefully within the functional life of the city. Integrated conservation had been highlighted in the European Charter of the Architectural Heritage and the subsequent Amsterdam Declaration: conservation should be one of the first considerations in all urban and regional planning, with full public participation (Council of Europe 1975). The concept was explained more fully in a subsequent detailed resolution (Council of Europe 1976), which was cited as a point of reference in the revised "Rules for Technical Assistance", which were issued in 1979 in order to speed up the Council of Europe's own internal procedures in considering applications.

Malta was quick off the mark in applying, but although the importance of the architectural heritage of the island was acknowledged along with the desirability of making a practical demonstration of solidarity among member states, the request for assistance, in being concerned with traditional restoration work, failed to meet the requirement for integrated conservation and was, moreover, seeking material aid (photographic equipment, etc.) rather than simply expert advice: the Committee of Ministers advised an approach to UNESCO, whose Technical Assistance programme covered traditional restoration work (UNESCO 1972).

Although the rules had been agreed in 1973, the first mission was not completed until 1977, two years after a request was made by the Federal Republic of Germany for advice on the Münsterberg at Breisach-am-Rhein, a historic quarter that was regarded as "a special case of integrated conservation" which required a new town-planning scheme to take greater account of the characteristics of

the densely built ancient town (Council of Europe 1977). This was followed three years later by the submission of the second technical assistance report to the German government on the historic city of Oldenburg (Council of Europe 1980). It is significant that both of these German examples, and subsequent investigations in Toledo (Spain, in 1981), Evora (Portugal, in 1984) and Guimaraes (Portugal, in 1985) were devoted to the problems of historic town centres. The Council of Europe had by this time developed considerable experience in this subject following the launch in 1973 of 44 exemplary pilot projects on about 60 historic towns, designed to illustrate the various aspects of integrated conservation, to shed light on the particular difficulties posed by each and to propose appropriate solutions. It was perhaps this initiative, as much as the unwieldy bureaucratic procedures, which delayed the beginnings of technical assistance missions, the commencement of which was then given impetus by the events and publicity of European Architectural Heritage Year (1975).

The revised rules (1979) reaffirmed that technical assistance was available only for integrated conservation (rather than individual restoration projects), that is, the whole range of measures aimed at ensuring the safeguarding of heritage, its maintenance as part of an appropriate environment, whether man-made or natural, and its utilisation and adaptation to the needs of society. The measures were to have two main objectives: first, the conservation or enhancement of monuments, groups of buildings and sites; second, their integration into the physical environment of present-day society, initially through programmes designed to revitalise monuments and old buildings belonging to groups by assigning them a social purpose, possibly differing from their original function but compatible with their dignity and as far as possible in keeping with the character of their setting; and subsequently, through rehabilitation of buildings, particularly those intended for habitation, by renovating their internal structure, adapting it to the needs of modern life while carefully preserving features of cultural interest.

The Committee of Ministers adopted further revisions in 1987 to counteract a perception that the existing rules were insufficiently flexible and in acknowledgement of the continuing shortcomings and delays in procedures. It was further acknowledged that the complexity of problems was such that short missions were not always productive and that assistance spread over two or three years could be more effective. These revisions were made in light of the undertaking expressed in the Granada Convention: "to afford, whenever necessary, mutual technical assistance in the form of exchanges of experience and of experts in the conservation of the architectural heritage" (Council of Europe 1985: Article 18). The emphasis on integrated conservation was reaffirmed but expanded so that the assistance was designed to provide national, regional and local authorities with help in solving complex problems relating to the conservation and enhancement not only of individual monuments and sites but also of the wider built environment. Recourse to Council of Europe assistance was to be justified not only by the complexity of the conservation problem but also by the multinational interest inherent in the cultural property. Nominated experts, experienced in conservation and town planning were to be drawn from the widest possible geographical area. Following their reports, which were to be published as public documents, follow-up missions might be considered and the Council of Europe also undertook to liaise with the member states and the European institutions with a view to obtaining funding for the carrying out of recommended work.

Following the tumultuous political changes which swept across central and eastern Europe in 1989, further adaptations to circumstance were inevitable as the extension of the Technical Co-operation programme to the new member states of the Council of Europe established it as a key instrument for the future of European solidarity. The new rules drawn up in 1992 were far-reaching, extending the scope of applications for assistance to problems concerning the protection, conservation, enhancement, management, use and reuse of the architectural and archaeological heritage, the protection and improvement of sites and landscapes; they also related to town-planning problems