Foreword

The Council of Europe has, for many years, contributed towards setting European standards in the field of cultural and natural heritage. Its texts aim to strengthen institutions and support necessary legislative or administrative reforms in the context of implementing international conventions or harmonising the heritage policies in European countries.

Projects carried out by the Technical Co-operation and Consultancy Programme related to the Integrated Conservation of the Cultural Heritage have highlighted needs and expectations to produce "guidelines" which have been made possible through experience acquired in the field. In-depth studies have been carried out by ad hoc groups of experts to identify, establish and publish these guidelines.

This volume, updated in 2008, by John Bold and Ksenija Kovacec, is a compilation of work carried out in specific inventory fields since the 1990s and is, most importantly, based on the *Core data index to historic buildings and monuments of the architectural heritage* adopted by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe in 1995 in Recommendation (95) 3. It also contains more recent complementary studies, in the fields of archaeological sites and cultural objects. This volume, while explicitly establishing the value of the debate held within the Council of Europe throughout the years, puts the concept of inventory and documentation back into context in order to consider urban ensembles as specific fields of application, thus meeting current management issues concerning living conditions and the built environment. Indeed, willingness to widen this concept, placing particular emphasis on the role of inventory management is tied in with the changing perception of heritage, which has now been integrated into the organization's priorities in view of sustainable social and economic development, social cohesion, democratic citizenship and the fight against poverty.

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Introduction

Inventory in the Council of Europe

This document, on the use of inventories in the documentation of the built heritage, is based on current best practice within member states of the Council of Europe, and on experience gained within the Technical Co-operation and Consultancy Programme of the Council of Europe. It is advisory and descriptive rather than prescriptive, since it is acknowledged that there are varying circumstances and requirements and technical skills and equipment available within the responsible institutions of member states.

This is intended as a guidance document for the use of all concerned with the understanding, management, conservation, preservation and promotion of our common heritage and for those countries which might require technical co-operation in that field.

The Council of Europe was founded on 5th May 1949 and has 47 member states and 48 signatory States to the European Cultural Convention. It has become the most geographically widespread organisation in Europe. The Council was set up to 'achieve a greater unity between its members for the purpose of safeguarding and realising the ideals and principles which are their common heritage and facilitating their economic and social progress'. It was to achieve this aim 'by discussion of questions of common concern and by agreements and common action in economic, social, cultural, scientific, legal and administrative matters and in the maintenance and further realisation of human rights and fundamental freedoms'.

Since the 1960s, the Council of Europe has worked to protect and enhance the architectural and archaeological heritage, through the exchange of ideas and expertise and through developing key texts and activities.

The *European Convention on the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage* was opened for signature in 1969. In 1975, the *European Charter of the Architectural Heritage* was adopted and proclaimed through the *Amsterdam Declaration*, wherein it was recognised that "Europe's unique architecture is the common heritage of all her peoples", to be protected by member states working with one another. The Charter introduced the concept of "integrated conservation", incorporating the conservation of the architectural heritage as a fundamental component of urban and regional planning, rather than as a secondary consideration. The principles drafted in Amsterdam were reaffirmed in 1985 when the Granada Convention – the Convention for the

Protection of the Architectural Heritage of Europe – was opened for signature. Statutory measures were put forward in the Convention by which the contracting parties should protect the architectural heritage – monuments, groups of buildings and sites – according to certain minimum standards and actions. These comprised the maintenance of inventories; the identification of properties to be protected; ancillary financial and fiscal measures to provide support for maintenance and restoration; provision for sanctions; integrated conservation policies; the promotion of training in the occupations and crafts involved in conservation; and the development of public awareness, from school-age onwards, of the value of conserving the architectural heritage "both as an element of cultural identity and as a source of inspiration and creativity for present and future generations".

The European Convention on Offences relating to Cultural Property – the Delphi Convention – was opened for signature in 1985, but has not come into force, for want of enough ratifications.

The revised European Convention on the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage was opened for signature in Malta in 1992, "to protect the archaeological heritage as a source of the European collective memory and as an instrument for historical and scientific study". Replacing the 1969 Convention, which had concentrated on archaeological excavations, the Malta Convention reflected the growing impact of major urban development projects on the archaeological heritage, which made it necessary to find new methods of legal protection and funding for conservation activities, whilst affirming the well-established needs for surveys, inventories, information exchange and scientific and technical assistance.

The resolutions of the fourth European Conference of Ministers responsible for the Cultural Heritage, held in Helsinki in 1996, emphasised the need to develop further the integrated conservation mechanisms by incorporating the cultural heritage within a process of sustainable development, since it was recognised that the cultural and natural heritages, which together make up our environment, require combined action for their joint protection. The Conference laid stress on the promotion of access to knowledge and enjoyment of the common cultural heritage; on the need to create models for the development of cultural tourism; on the continuing need for the fulfilment of national and local responsibilities for protection, together with the encouragement of voluntary initiatives; on cross-sectoral and partnership arrangements in the protection of the heritage; and on the study, documentation and preservation of cultural assets as "authentic evidence of the history of culture and human civilisation".

It is the resounding principles which have been articulated in these Charters, Conventions and Conferences which inform the work of the Inventory and

Documentation *ad hoc* group, presented in the current document. It has been designed to accompany and complement the related work on legislation, namely the book *Guidance on the Development of Legislation and Administration Systems in the Field of Cultural Heritage* published by the Council of Europe in 2000 within the framework of the Technical Co-operation and Consultancy Programme. It should be regarded as a contribution to the future activities to be implemented by the Council of Europe in the field of cultural heritage as they were adopted in Resolution n°2 of the Conference of Ministers responsible for Cultural Heritage held in April 2001 in Portoroz (Slovénia). It puts the acquired knowledge on standard setting back into perspective so as to take into account the architectural ensemble, which requires a specific documentary approach or method deriving from existing techniques.

The importance of documentation and the need for standards

The role of inventories in the management of the cultural heritage has long been recognised. They are indispensable, for purposes of identification, protection, interpretation, and physical preservation of movable objects, historic buildings, archaeological sites, and cultural landscapes. They have a significant place in all major international conventions relating to the protection of the heritage.

These guidelines present three international standards for the documentation of the cultural heritage: *the Core Data Index to Historic Buildings and Monuments of the Architectural Heritage, the International Core Data Standard for Archaeological Sites and Monuments, and the core data standard for identifying cultural objects – Object ID*. These standards were brought together in the 1998 publication *Documenting the Cultural Heritage,* (ISBN 0 89236-543-9) and are re-published here to provide a readily accessible guide for use by those responsible for documenting and managing the archaeological, architectural and movable heritage.

Organisations responsible for the cultural heritage are part of a network of mutual dependencies, needing to share information and maintain contact with fellow professionals in their own and associated fields. Information sharing is not only a prerequisite for the better understanding and effective management of the cultural heritage, but is important for other interrelated reasons, including:

- The promotion and interpretation of the heritage for economic purposes, such as cultural tourism and regional development,

- The reinforcement of cultural and social identity at regional, national, and international levels,

- The ability to combat the theft of and illicit traffic in cultural property on a global scale.

Although documentation of the cultural heritage is already carried out at the local and national levels, the need to use information produced by documentation centres is becoming international in scale, responsive to global trends in economic activity, cultural awareness, and crime.

Now with the possibilities that information technology offers for contact and information sharing, the benefits of creating cultural heritage information networks are clear. These include the enabling of common access to inventories created and managed by divers organisations. Common access can be achieved, however, only if documentation standards are developed to ensure compatibility between the databases that constitute the network. This compatibility is most readily achieved at the level of minimum or "core" information, i.e. those categories of essential, basic documentation common to a number of documentation projects. The adoption of such "core data" categories makes it easier to record, retrieve, and exchange information electronically. Although the concept of core data has been developed with computers in mind, it also has a wider application in representing a way of indexing, ordering, and classifying information, independently of whether that information is on paper, card index, or database. As a mechanism, it is not an end to itself, but is designed to provide a way in – a key – to further information held on a database or in an archive. Such further information will vary according to the needs and purposes of individual organisations.

The three initiatives have identified the core information regarded as necessary for documenting the architectural, archaeological, and movable heritage. The categories in all three have been drawn up, and approved by potential users, on the basis that they do not require organisations to collect information that they would otherwise not collect, or seek to make users conform to systems that are incompatible with their own needs. Rather, the core data categories provide agreed structures for the ordering of the information that is regarded as indispensable for proper cultural heritage management. Because they have been developed in similar ways, with comparable ends in view, the three standards presented here may either stand alone, or if organisational needs demand it, be linked together in order to make it possible to compile ensemble records of archaeology, buildings, and movable objects. In offering this possibility, they represent the achievement of a milestone in documentation, embracing both the movable and immovable cultural heritage.

Summary of the main chapters

- The investigation and documentation of the built heritage is central to our appreciation of our geographical situation and our understanding of our historical evolution. We make inventories of that heritage in order to understand and to manage our inheritance (chapter 1).

- The definition of "heritage" has broadened and deepened in recent years, in parallel with unprecedented physical and economic change. Inventory compilation has a vital part to play in establishing the component parts of our common heritage in changing times, and in engendering public support for its understanding and protection (chapter 2).

- The inventory is required for purposes of protection, restoration, conservation, planning and education. Within these broad categories, different inventories are needed for different tasks. They may be detailed or summary, selective or exhaustive, topographically or thematically based (chapter 3).

- Identification and inventorisation are fundamental to the protection and management of the built heritage. Public support is critical to the success of this process (chapter 4).

- The consideration of the ensemble – groups of buildings and open spaces, which have a complementary relationship – is crucial to modern heritage management. The adoption of a simple data index for the documentation of the ensemble is proposed (chapter 5).

- The adoption of internationally agreed standards for the collecting and ordering of information goes together with strategies for the improvement of the management of the institutions which are responsible for introducing them (chapter 6).

- The inventory is never finished: strategies are required for maintenance, updating and ensuring a clarity and consistency of approach (chapter 7).

- Access to, and ownership of information, with attendant rights and responsibilities, are vital issues in inventory compilation and management. (chapter 8).

- Agreed standards are a basic requirement in the cataloguing and marshalling of information on the built heritage and in the creation of associated databases (chapter 9).

- Training of practitioners in the identification and inventorisation of the built heritage is crucial to the success of the process (chapter 10).

- The publication explains the genesis of the individual standards and provides examples of their application – in chapters 11-13. The examples illustrate the compatibility of the standards and demonstrate the potential for linking them in documentation centres.