

LATVIA

I.01. Introduction

Year of adherence to the Convention: 1995

Organisation(s) or institution(s) responsible for preparation of report

- The State Inspection for Heritage Protection
- The Ministry of Environment

I.02. Identification of Cultural and Natural Properties

Status of national inventories

- Inventories for cultural and natural heritage are established at national level, and are used as a basis for selecting World Heritage sites

I.03. The Tentative List

- Original Tentative List was submitted in 1995
- Revisions submitted in 2004
- The State Inspection for Heritage Protection is responsible for identifying the properties on the tentative list
- The Tentative List was prepared on national and local level, involving public consultation

I.04. Nomination of Cultural and Natural Properties for the World Heritage List

Nominations

- Central and regional/local government, in cooperation with NGOs, is responsible for preparing World Heritage site nominations and carries out the work in cooperation with heritage experts
- Motivations for nomination: honour/prestige, conservation of sites and increased funding
- Difficulties encountered: inadequate staffing, lack of funding and development pressures

Inscriptions

- 1 cultural site: *Historic Centre of Riga* (1997)¹

Benefits of inscription

- Conservation of sites, endangered site protected, and honour/prestige

I.05. General Policy and Legislation for the Protection, Conservation and Presentation of the Cultural and Natural Heritage

Specific legislations

- The Law on Protection of Cultural Monuments (1992), together with the Statutes of the State Inspection for Heritage Protection and 37 other laws and normative acts affecting the field of cultural heritage
- The Protection of Nature and Environment Act and The Plan and Building Act are under revision
- Legislation for the identification and protection of natural heritage can be divided in the following groups: laws on protection of species and habitats, laws on establishment, protection and use of specially protected nature territories, and laws on ratified Conventions
- There is a special law "On Preservation and Protection of the Historic Centre of Riga" on which the Council of Preservation and Protection and of the Historic Centre of Riga, and a special Foundation allocating resources for preservation activities, are established
- Management plans are required for cultural and natural heritage

Other Conventions

Granada Convention (1985), Valetta Convention (1992), Ramsar Convention (1971), CITES Convention (1973), Bonn Convention (1979), Bern Convention (1979), and the Convention on Biological Diversity (1992)

I.06. Status of Services for Protection, Conservation and Presentation

Organisations, local communities participating in protection and conservation

- The Ministry of Culture, the State Inspection for Heritage Protection
- Services are provided at all levels and often in joint projects between different administrative levels
- The conservation of cultural heritage is integrated in the national programme "Culture", while nature protection is integrated in the Nature Conservation Plans for Specially Protected Nature Territories
- The conservation of heritage also involves the private sector, local communities and NGOs

I.07. Scientific, Technical Studies and Research

- Heritage research and development programmes; Studies of Art Nouveau Architecture, The Study of Carnaca Temple, and Studies of Vernacular Architecture

¹ Also the transnational serial site: *Struve Geodetic Arc* (2005).

I.08. Financial Resources

National resources and international financial assistance, fund raising

- State-Party budget allowance, local/regional authority budget allowance
- NGOs
- World Heritage Fund
- Council of Europe
- The State Party has established the State Culture Capital Foundation, the Arais Lake Fortress Foundation, the Abbava Valley Foundation, the Latvian Fund for Nature, WWF Latvia, and the Historic Centre of Riga Foundation, allocating resources for preservation activities

I.09. Training

Professional and Institutional training

- Training needs for institutions and individuals concerned with the protection of World Heritage have been identified as workshops and seminars in restoration of wooden architecture
- Key training institutions in the field of World Heritage protection are the Riga Technical University, Latvian Academy of Arts, University of Latvia, Latvian Academy of Culture, Secondary Schools for different crafts and construction colleges, and the Latvian Chamber of Arts, as well as national/international seminars and courses

I.10. International Co-operation

- Cooperation with other States Parties for the identification, protection, conservation and preservation of World Heritage has been carried out through hosting and/or attending international courses/seminars, distribution of material/information, financial support, the exchange of experts, and through participation in different international heritage organisations
- Latvia has acted as consultants to Iraq on heritage protection issues, as well as participated in projects initiated by the Council of Europe

I.11. Information, Awareness Building and Education

Information and awareness raising on local, regional national or international level

- World Heritage sites are presented and promoted through publications, films, postcards, media campaigns, internet, postage/stamps, and national and international exhibitions on an international, national, regional and local level
- The presentation and general awareness of World Heritage sites is not adequate, but measures to address this are suggested
- Education programmes in the field of World Heritage protection is included in general cultural heritage protection educational curricula.

Development of book-series on cultural heritage for children, hosting of heritage drawing competitions for children, and the "Cultural Heritage in Photography"

I.12. Conclusions and Recommended Action

Conclusion and proposed actions

- Strengths: Stable legislative basis for the protection of heritage; Recently adopted legislation on the protection of the Historic Centre of Riga; Active involvement in international cooperation (through the Council of Europe and the Baltic Sea Region); Awareness-raising through regular media campaigns and good cooperation with journalists for delivery of quality information to the public, as well as informative internet sites
- Weaknesses: Lack of funding to observe and follow up the rules and norms of the legislation; Lack of highly qualified restorers; Need to review tax policy concerning cultural monuments through strengthening of state and local municipalities' responsibility in allocating funds; Pressure from investors introducing information material from commercial and/or economic point of view that disregard long-time perspectives and sustainable development

Proposed actions:

- Information campaign on cultural heritage and the Historic Centre of Riga
- Draft of Riga Masterplan 2006 – 2018
- Information campaign on tax policy and financing of cultural heritage
- Support to involvement of Latvian experts in the Working Group on heritage protection in the Baltic Sea Region
- Closer cooperation with Baltic countries in solving common Baltic problems
- Complete the internet site of the State Inspection for Heritage Protection