



LIVING WITH WORLD HERITAGE:

Adaptive Reuse and Regeneration in the Euro- Mediterranean Region

17-18 May 2021
WORLD HERITAGE CITY LAB

Report

UNESCO World Heritage Centre – Union for
the Mediterranean

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Note: The cases shared in this report address heritage protection practices in World Heritage sites and beyond. Project results presented during the webinar and reflected in this report do not entail any type of recognition or inclusion in the World Heritage list or any of its thematic programmes. The practices shared are not assessed in any way by the World Heritage Centre or presented here as model practices nor do they represent complete solutions to heritage management problems. The views expressed by experts, stakeholders, and site managers are their own and do not necessarily reflect the views of the World Heritage Centre. The practices and views shared here are included as a way to provide insights and expand the dialogue on heritage conservation with a view to further urban heritage management practice in general.

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Living with World Heritage:

Adaptive Reuse and Regeneration in the Euro-Mediterranean Region

Executive summary

Cities and urban settlements are growing exponentially everywhere. According to the studies on population distribution by the United Nations, the number of people living in urban areas is expected to reach 68% of the world's population by 2050. In particular, the Mediterranean region is among the most densely populated areas around a sea in the world, with a population that has doubled over the past 40 years reaching 512 million in 2018, and it is expected to grow by an additional 182 million inhabitants by 2050. The coastal strip is becoming increasingly populated and built up, and concentrates most of the major cities, many transport routes (roads, ports, airports), industrial and energy infrastructure. The Euro-Mediterranean region is also home to more than 150 UNESCO World Heritage cities that testify to its rich, long, and multi-layered history.

The numerous historic cities around the Euro-Mediterranean region calls for special attention to traditional forms of urbanisation, with the conservation of unique architectural and urban heritage, including some of the most impressive human achievements in urban design and architecture. Rapid and unplanned development of major urban areas, coupled with the increasing impact of climate change, has caused a fast decline of many historic city centres, raising concerns on the state of conservation of the World Heritage properties, endangering the urban heritage and unique identity of the Euro-Mediterranean region.

The Union for the Mediterranean (UfM), an intergovernmental organisation with 42 Member States from Europe and the Mediterranean region, and the UNESCO World Heritage Centre (WHC), organised a two-day online conference *Living with*

World Heritage: Adaptive Reuse and Regeneration in the Euro-Mediterranean region on 17-18 May 2021, to discuss sustainable opportunities for urban regeneration in the Euro-Mediterranean region, with a specific attention to historic cities. The recently launched *UfM Strategic Urban Development Action Plan 2040 for sustainable, resilient and inclusive cities and communities in the Mediterranean* and the *UfM Housing Action Plan for affordable and sustainable housing*, included substantial inputs on the 2011 UNESCO Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape (HUL Recommendation) and references to the protection of World Heritage properties as well as the implementation of the World Heritage Convention (1972). This event aimed to address, through the intervention of experts, stakeholders, and the observation of some case studies, a reflection on the methods and approaches to resilient futures for urban communities, marking the 10th Anniversary of the HUL Recommendation. Gathering participants from different Euro-Mediterranean countries, the seminar focused on diverse issues, from climate change-related concerns to the effect of population growth, with a particular emphasis on practical examples of successful integration of urban heritage management and sustainable development processes.

The video recordings of each session are available on the YouTube channel of the Union for the Mediterranean.

[Watch Session 1 \(17 May 2021\)](#)

[Watch Session 2 \(18 May 2021\)](#)

At the end of this report, main takeaways from the different presentations and discussions were synthesised into general conclusions. They put a special emphasis on planning and integrating efforts in a transversal way and preparing efficient tools and management structures for regeneration and reuse.

Concept note

Rationale and overall purpose

According to studies conducted by the United Nations, globally, more people live in urban areas than in rural areas, with 55 per cent of the world's population residing in urban areas in 2018 (Europe 74%, Asia approximately 50%, Africa 43%). In 1950, 30% of the world's population was urban. Between 2020 and 2050, globally, the portion of people living in urban areas is expected to shift from 53% to 68%¹. In this context, Africa is projected to have the fastest urban growth rate in the world: by 2050, Africa's cities will be home to an additional 950 million people².

Cities and settlements have grown rapidly and exponentially, often inadequately planned, and yet, at the same time, many of them have evolved over centuries as rich repositories of history, heritage and identity. Their diversity of forms reflects the historical encounters, environments and influences that each city or settlement has experienced.

The Mediterranean region is among the most densely populated areas around a sea in the world.³ The total population of the Mediterranean countries grew from 276 million in 1970 to 512 million in 2018, and it is expected to grow by an additional 182 million inhabitants by 2050. The coastal strip is becoming increasingly populated and built up, and concentrates most of the major cities, many transport routes (roads, ports, airports), industrial and energy infrastructure.⁴ The Mediterranean region is also home to more than 150 UNESCO World Heritage cities that testify its rich, long, and multi-layered history.

The unique historic heritage of cities around the Mediterranean calls for special attention to traditional forms of urbanisation, with the conservation of unique architectural and urban heritage, including some of the most impressive human achievements in urban form and architecture. Rapid and unplanned development of major urban areas, coupled with the onset of climate change, has caused a fast decline of many historical city centres, raising concerns on the state of conservation of the World Heritage properties, endangering cultural heritage, the wider urban landscape and the unique identity of the Mediterranean region.

¹ World Urbanization Prospects - The 2018 Revision. UN/DESA, 1 January 2019.

² Africa's Urbanization Dynamics 2020. OECD, 7 February 2020.

³ Statistics on European Neighbourhood Policy countries: South — 2020 edition. Eurostat 19 May 2020.

⁴ SoED 2020: State of Environment and Development in the Mediterranean. UNEP/MAP, 21 October 2020.

The Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) is an intergovernmental organisation with 42 Member States. Its membership covers all EU Member States and all the other Mediterranean littoral countries, among others. In view of the fact that global challenges are interconnected and can only be addressed through reinvigorated multilateralism⁵, the Union for the Mediterranean has devised with the World Heritage Centre as a Knowledge Partner, a *UfM Strategic Urban Development Action Plan 2040 for sustainable, resilient and inclusive cities and communities in the Mediterranean* and a *UfM Housing Action Plan* for affordable and sustainable housing as a vector for inclusive, integrated and sustainable urban development and regeneration in the region. The Action Plans acknowledge that culture, heritage and the historic urban landscape approach are key to creating sustainable and inclusive economies in the region, not only through tourism, but also via the cultural and social embeddedness of the solutions pursued. The Action Plans recommend an integrated heritage strategy for the conservation and sustainable use of the valuable cultural heritage of the region, including its architectural and urban heritage, while integrating heritage conservation with sustainable urban development, including culture-specific housing. The 2011 UNESCO Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape (HUL Recommendation) has been mainstreamed into the UfM Action Plans as a holistic approach to achieving these objectives. Also, the Mediterranean Heritage Knowledge Hub is planned to be established with a view to facilitate integration of UNESCO's aforementioned Recommendation and related projects, including heritage protection and peer-to-peer learning and exchange of experiences for local, regional and national policymakers on financing and managing the conservation and re-use of built heritage in cities in line with circular economy models.

In fact, many historic city centres that have been continuously inhabited for centuries, need improvements to make them liveable and sustainable in the contemporary context. Historic cities, over time may have become overcrowded, decrepit, and poor, or abandoned and desolate as residents leave for better opportunities. The HUL Recommendation provides a framework for considering policies, actions, and investments for regeneration and adaptive reuse of historic urban centres towards making them more inclusive, safe, and sustainable. UNESCO's approach to managing historic places is holistic in that it integrates the goals of urban heritage conservation and those of social and economic development. This method regards urban heritage as a social, cultural and economic asset for the development of cities. This way, the approach of the HUL Recommendation moves beyond the preservation of the physical environment and focuses on the entire human environment with all its tangible and intangible attributes. It also seeks to increase the sustainability of planning and design

⁵ Declaration on the commemoration of the seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations. UNGA, 16 September 2020.

interventions, by taking into account the existing built environment, associated intangible heritage, cultural diversity, socio-economic and environmental factors, along with local community values.

The HUL Recommendation was adopted by the UNESCO's General Conference on 10 November 2011. The key findings of the Second Member State Survey on the Implementation of the HUL Recommendation (2019) reflect that the Recommendation needs to be implemented as an urgent and necessary tool for resolving the conflicting demands of heritage conservation and urban development towards more sustainable cities. This is necessary both for those cities that have properties inscribed on the World Heritage List and those that do not. With increasing threats from poorly planned urban development, World Heritage Committee decisions have identified the need to better address urban pressures for development in and around World Heritage properties (Decision 41 COM 7; Decision 43 COM 7.3) as well as emphasized the crucial importance of implementing the HUL Recommendation for World Heritage cities (Decision 42 COM 5A)⁶.

The UNESCO World Heritage Centre is the Secretariat of the 1972 World Heritage Convention governed by the intergovernmental World Heritage Committee. As part of its activities, the World Heritage Cities Programme is one of the six thematic programmes approved and monitored by the World Heritage Committee since 2001. Until May 2021, 313 properties inscribed on the World Heritage List made part of the World Heritage Cities Programme. These properties are inscribed for their Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) that makes the heritage valuable not only to that country or city but to all of humanity, and hence must be protected as a joint effort. Towards this, the properties must protect OUV and ensure the conditions of Authenticity and Integrity. The local attributes of urban heritage identity must be protected to ensure continued significance and manage change over time.

The seminar focused on various issues and looked for practical examples that could support the better integration of urban heritage management in urban development plans and processes.

Objectives of this World Heritage City Lab:

1. Discuss opportunities and challenges for urban regeneration in historic cities in the Mediterranean region.
2. Discuss methods and approaches for adaptive reuse in historic cities in the Mediterranean region.
3. Examine some case studies to develop some general recommendations.

⁶ Decisions included until May 2021 when this World Heritage City Lab was held.

Agenda

Session 1_17 May 2021

Chair: Victoria Jimenez, Head of Sector for Urban Development, Union for the Mediterranean Secretariat

10.00 – 10.20 Opening Speeches:

- Ms Jyoti Hosagrahar, Deputy Director of the UNESCO World Heritage Centre
- Mr Nasser Kamel, Secretary-General Union for the Mediterranean

10:20 – 10:30 Lecture: *The Approach of the 2011 Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape to integrating Urban Heritage in Urban Processes*, Ms Jyoti Hosagrahar, Deputy Director of the UNESCO World Heritage Centre

10.30 – 10.45 Lecture: *New European Bauhaus initiative and cultural heritage*, – Mr Hughes Becquart, Programme Officer at the Creative Europe Programme

10:45 – 11:00 Case study: *Culture Heritage leading urban futures: the ROCK project*, Ms Silvia Bartoloni, Municipality of Bologna

11:00 – 11:15 Case study: *World Heritage site of the “Medina of Tunis”*, Mr Montassar Jmour, Institut National du Patrimoine

11:15 – 11:30 Lecture: *EIB financing for urban cultural heritage*, Mr Gerry Muscat, Head of Division, Regional and Urban Development at European Investment Bank

11:30 – 12:00 Discussion and Q&A moderated by Mr Rohit Jigyasu (ICCROM)

Session 2_18 May 2021

Chair: Ms Jyoti Hosagrahar, Deputy Director of the UNESCO World Heritage Centre

10:00 – 10:05 Session recap

10:05 – 10:15 Lecture: *Nature-Culture linkages*, Ms Karin Helms, Representative of the International Federation of Landscape Architects (IFLA) in Europe

10:15 – 10:25 Contribution by Mr Thomas Vonier, President of the International Union of Architects (UIA)

10:30 – 10:45 Case Study: *Georgetown, Malaysia*, Mr Hamdan Majeed, Executive Director of ThinkCity Malaysia

10:45 – 11:00 Case Study: *World Heritage site “Historic Site of Lyon”, « Plan Local d’Urbanisme de la Métropole de Lyon – Patrimoines urbains et paysagers »*, Mr Philippe Lamy, Urban Coordinator in charge of the Historic Site of Lyon

11:00 – 11:15 Lecture: *Islamic Development Bank financing for urban cultural heritage: Muharraq Pearling Heritage Conservation and Urban Economic Revival Project in Bahrain*, Mr Papa Abdoulaye Sy, Global Lead Urban Development, Islamic Development Bank

11:15 – 11:25 Lecture: *Urban projects and restoration of heritage*, Ms Fatima Chioukh, Project-Team Leader, Division of Urban Development, Planning and Housing of the Agence Française de Développement

11:25 – 11:55 Discussion moderated by Ms Elizabeth Vines, ICOMOS

11:55 – 12:00 Final closing

The 2 conference sessions were held in English, French, Arabic with simultaneous interpretation between 10:00-12:00 Central European Summer Time (CEST) on Monday 17 May and Tuesday 18 May 2021 through the Zoom platform.

Session 1

Summary of interventions

Session opening by Ms Victoria Jimenez (Head of Sector for Urban Development, Union for the Mediterranean)

Special address Ms Jyoti Hosagrahar (Deputy Director, UNESCO World Heritage Centre)

Ms Hosagrahar addressed the opportunities for heritage adaptive reuse in the Euro-Mediterranean region in the context of an increasing urban population. She also highlighted the potential of urban heritage contributing towards sustainable development and urban heritage management.

The strong presence of historic cities in the region implies a need for special attention to protect their architectural and urban heritage. This is especially important in the face of challenges such as climate change, the ongoing pandemic crisis and the consequences of mass tourism. Ms Hosagrahar summarized the most recent actions undertaken by the UNESCO World Heritage Centre to assist World Heritage cities in facing these current challenges.

Regarding adaptive reuse and urban regeneration, she highlighted the importance of the sustainable use of urban heritage for local communities, according to the needs of present and future generations.

Finally, all attendees were invited to take part in the celebrations of the 10th Anniversary of the HUL Recommendation this year, 2021.

Special address Mr Nasser Kamel (Secretary General, Union for the Mediterranean)

Mr Kamel highlighted the importance of being aware of human-induced pressures, which have greatly affected the Euro-Mediterranean region in the last three decades. Urban population is especially growing along the coastal line, which is subject to significant environmental and climate change. Among other consequences of climate change, sea level is rising in the Mediterranean area affecting many cities and heritage sites, which are experiencing significant damage.

Mr Kamel called to collectively encourage local, national, and international policy making and actions for a systemic adaptation to the changing circumstances in the region (taking the HUL Recommendation, the UN Sustainable Development Goals, and the Agenda 2030 as points of departure to design future action). These recommendations need to be adapted to the region looking at new development models grounded on local communities' values, traditional urban design, and contextualised spatial planning.

He concluded by highlighting the crucial role of urban heritage in long-term strategic development.

The Approach of the 2011 Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape to integrating Urban Heritage in Urban Processes, Ms Jyoti Hosagrahar (Deputy Director of the UNESCO World Heritage Centre)

In her lecture, Ms Hosagrahar underlined the importance of resilience and sustainability need to be core goals for historic cities, especially focusing on social, cultural, and climate adaptation.

The Deputy Director presented a general introduction on the HUL Recommendation as a framework for sustainable development in historic cities and its implementation through the identification of attributes of urban heritage identity, and the use of a methodology framework both defined as part of the Outcomes of the experts meeting that took place in Fukuoka, Japan⁷ (2020). She presented historic cities as complex environments characterised by the layering of values (tangible, intangible, natural, cultural) and outlined some key attributes that constitute this urban identity.

Ms Hosagrahar highlighted as well how the integration of heritage in existing and new policies can bridge effectively conservation and sustainable development. In this frame, heritage-led regeneration and adaptive reuse (including conservation, economic revitalisation, climate action, social inclusion and community empowerment) are essential actions.

Some of the key steps highlighted by Ms Hosagrahar were:

1. Identify which heritage attributes are key to the conditions for integrity and authenticity;
2. Identify stakeholders and future beneficiaries;
3. Identify key sustainable development objectives;
4. Design solutions with minimal modifications of the physical fabric;
5. Utilise local materials and construction techniques.

The presentation ended with an introduction to *the UNESCO Culture|2030 indicators*, the World Heritage Cities Programme and the activities related to the HUL Recommendation.

⁷ <https://whc.unesco.org/en/events/1516/>

New European Bauhaus initiative and cultural heritage, Mr Hughes Becquart (Programme Officer, Creative Europe - European Commission)

The New European Bauhaus is an initiative in support of the implementation of the European Green Deal to living spaces and the process of building back better after the COVID-19 pandemic. The initiative is destined to inspire local governments and citizens in the European area. In this this context, multi-sectoral initiatives are carried out linking sustainability, economy, culture and creativity. To successfully implement such initiatives in a sustainable way, understanding of heritage and cities is crucial. Besides, a strong component of the programme is citizen mobilisation, as community and citizen engagement is crucial in urban regeneration processes.

Some of the main points introduced by Mr Becquart were:

- Heritage and culture are integral parts of environmental and social sustainability, multi-sectoral approach, and citizen engagement.
- The initiative is grounded on the application of design and urban architecture principles to help implement the European Green Deal (“form follows function”, etc.). Moreover, as an environmental, economic and cultural initiative, it focuses on urban and rural spaces, and aims at connecting people to urban environments through social inclusion and support to sustainable integrated development and tangible transformation.
- The working structure is composed by a core project team (Joint Research Centre of the European Commission under the president’s cabinet) with the support of high-level roundtables.
- The timeline of the initiative is structured in three phases: co-designing phase (December 2020 - summer 2021, period to shape the initiative, understand the leading concepts, outreach capacity); delivering phase (summer 2021 - 2024, time to support framework including proposals of pilot projects, flanking measures, exact financing structure); disseminating phase (2022 - open end).
- The initiative is presented as an opportunity for European and non-European residents to apply and take part in the prizes organised in the context of the New European Bauhaus on heritage, urban regeneration, mobilisation of culture, arts and communities, or new education models.
- There are several linked resources: Leeuwarden Declaration, EU quality principles for EU-funded interventions with potential impact upon cultural heritage (ICOMOS), Davos Baukultur Quality System (based on eight criteria: governance, functionality, environment, economy, diversity, context, sense of place and beauty).

Case study: Culture Heritage leading urban futures: the ROCK project, Ms Silvia Bartoloni (Municipality of Bologna)

The EU “ROCK - Cultural Heritage leading urban futures” (ROCK) project was presented as a peer-to-peer learning and networking initiative amongst heritage cities. The central elements of ROCK (acronym for Regeneration and Optimisation of Cultural Heritage in creative and Knowledge cities) are the empowerment of local actors and the possibility for cities to learn from each other. This is a joint programme that includes both historic cities and World Heritage cities.

Ms Bartoloni introduced the ROCK project, funded by the Horizon 2020 scheme for the 2017-2020 period, as a network of European cities and institutions working together towards collective and social regeneration in historic city centres and heritage places.

Following the experiences developed in 7 “Role Model” cities (Athens, Cluj-Napoca, Eindhoven, Liverpool, Lyon, Turin and Vilnius), three European cities have been involved in the last stage of the project as “Replicators”: Lisbon (working on the library of the Marvila District), Bologna (working on more inclusive and accessible spaces for the University area) and Skopje (working on the development of the Skopje Urban Living Lab, with a focus on community participation in the ideas competition, and the establishment of the SDI - Skopje Development Institute).

For the city of Bologna:

- The initiative revolved around three axes:
 - accessibility,
 - sustainability
 - new collaborations.
- The main goals of the ROCK project were:
 - supporting and monitoring accessibility,
 - monitoring climate impact,
 - cultural heritage experience and perception tracking.
- Soft actions taken as part of the project included:
 - strategies for urban regeneration with heritage as a vector of progress,
 - circular, integrated and holistic approaches to regeneration.
- The initiative outlined a methodology, which is developed in three phases:
 - phase 1 – mapping,
 - phase 2 – action,
 - phase 3 – research, from experiences to policy recommendation.

Ms Bartolini stressed the central role that Living Labs had for the Municipality of Bologna in creating a context that guaranteed the conditions for implementation of the project and accompanying the shift from ideas to actions according to the following scheme: Stakeholders --> Living Labs --> ROCK project implementation and generative actions <-- technologies <-- impact.

Ms Bartolini also emphasised the main outcomes of the project, such as the reduced distance between urban actors leading to a mutual exchange of skills, the implementation of a transdisciplinary approach, and the key role of universities and other non-institutional but non-secondary urban actors involved in the project.

In conclusion, three main key points will be core to future actions: accessibility, sustainability, and collaboration.

Case study: World Heritage site of the “Medina of Tunis”, Mr Montassar Jmour (*Institut National du Patrimoine*)

Mr Jmour introduced the case study, focusing in particular on the history and urban structure of the World Heritage site of the “Medina of Tunis”. He also addressed the policy and institutional context of the *Medina*, mentioning some of the actors involved in its protection, from ministries to local authorities.

- The main problems outlined relate to old infrastructures, the precarious living conditions of local residents, heritage degradation, and the impacts of the economic crisis on heritage management.
- The actions taken on the “Medina of Tunis” respond to four main objectives:
 - Urban rehabilitation that considers traditional characteristics, sustainable action and global development.
 - Better infrastructures.
 - Implication of a variety of actors.
- To reach the goals above, Mr Jmour mentioned further actions that need to be undertaken. They include:
 - The urgent rehabilitation of historic buildings.
 - An effective analysis of the needs of the different buildings and sites.
 - The definition of development strategies (some of which have already been accomplished; other are still in progress).
 - The production and implementation of touristic paths.

- The localisation of projects involved in renovation and rehabilitation programmes (e.g. Tourbet el Bey, Bab Djedid),
- The elaboration of a Plan of protection and valorisation (PSMV) to rule and protect the Medina.
- The use of NTIC technologies in the *Medina* area.

Some points for debate were shared by Mr Jmour:

- *What is role of the ancient areas of the city?*
- *Which actors should be mobilised?*
- *What are the difficulties identified in each context?*
- *What instruments and tools are most effective for the protection and management of historic cities?*

European Investment Bank financing for urban cultural heritage, Mr Gerry Muscat (Head of Division, Regional and Urban Development at European Investment Bank (EIB))

Mr Muscat started his contribution with an introduction on EIB (European Investment Bank) and the EIB Group financing actions, highlighting the elements that are essential to link culture and urban development, such as infrastructures, development through investment, and municipal, regional or national programme loans (these loans require meeting some requirements in terms of innovation, financial viability, sustainability, inclusivity). In this frame, projects must meet the EIB policy goals and be technically and financially sound.

- Mr Muscat approached the topic through practical examples on the importance of financial sustainability, long-term maintenance, economic analysis and benefits.
- Presented examples included:
 - Wroclaw National Music Forum (EU Grant + EIB Loan).
 - Art Norblin (industrial heritage reconversion).
 - Lorca, Spain (intervention after an earthquake).
 - Warsaw Copernicus Science Centre.
 - Infrastructure upgrade in Croatia to support tourism.
 - Support to “Medina 2030” initiative, which addresses culture and integrated development in the Mediterranean South, integration approach to spatial, economic, environmental and social action, (www.prca.gove.tn).

In all these examples the speaker highlighted the regeneration of historic assets, the improvement of the quality of life, and infrastructure and accessibility as key points of action (as in the case of the multi-actor partnership Europe – Tunisia).

Mr Muscat closed the intervention pointing out the relationship between the EIB Institute and cultural heritage. In fact, the philanthropic arm of the EIB has taken part in different site missions and funding operations, including the “7 Most Endangered Programme” (since 2013 with Europa Nostra).

Discussion: Reflections on the impact of the pandemic in cities

The final discussion was moderated by Mr Rohit Jigyasu (ICCROM), who opened the debate addressing some observations on the various presentations and summarising the main points highlighted:

- Several of the experiences presented during the session the application of an integrated approach between preservation, sustainable development actions and city development. Moreover, heritage-led innovation plays a crucial role in sustainable urban development, far beyond conservation. In particular the ROCK project examples of the Jewish ghetto in Skopje and the University of Bologna are clear examples of this.
- In parallel to development, preservation and production of memories of contemporary cities should always be a central part of management plans.
- The necessity to develop an integrated approach including the points of view of different disciplines and governmental departments (heritage conservation, housing, infrastructures, among others). Consolidating and protecting heritage involves the stimulation of local actions in neighbourhoods and urban areas by involving local communities and residents, public and private actors.

Mr Jigyasu concluded by stressing the importance of financial sustainability for cultural projects, especially considering their long-term costs, such as maintenance.

The session continued with a general discussion on the aforementioned topics.

- Ms Silvia Bartoloni (Municipality of Bologna) stressed how the pandemic deeply affected the implementation of the ROCK project. The format of the activities had to be revised, the timeline and deadlines of the project extended. Throughout 2020 activities were reviewed. Nevertheless, the pandemic promoted fast technological advances in the heritage sector, and use of digital tools allowed increasing the accessibility to heritage and knowledge for all citizens. In this moment, it is extremely important for the city of Bologna to continue developing cultural programmes under the concept of “cultural welfare”.

- Mr Montassar Jmour (site manager of the “Medina of Tunis”) shared the concerns of Ms Bartolini, since the economic crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic had a severe impact on many sectors in Tunis, especially tourism. Site management has encouraged the integration of new technologies and the creation of digital materials to be shared online as means to maintain the international attention on the *Medina*, in collaboration with local associations and institutions (for example, online guided tours and the organisation of cultural events for online broadcasting were developed).

Q&A

Two questions were asked by the audience:

- 1) How to balance local economic development and tourism, especially in the context of travel restrictions.
Can small businesses, creativity and handicrafts be more resilient?

- Ms Silvia Bartoloni (Municipality of Bologna) explained how in the months of pandemic, the city of Bologna experienced an increase in local tourism (tourism of proximity and even touristic activities by/for local citizens). Being creative and thinking about new solutions to living in historical and urban spaces is an opportunity to develop a more sustainable experience-based tourism.

- 2) *Which initiatives carried out in Tunis (besides the management plan) have an impact on planning policies?*

- Mr Montassar Jmour (Medina of Tunis) stressed the positive impact on site management of the creation of touristic services and the re-dynamization of activities and traditional crafts. In particular, it was important to define responsible actors for each developed activity, the preservation and management of identifies sited, and specific tasks and responsibilities.

Session 2

Summary of interventions

Session opening by Ms Jyoti Hosagrahar (Deputy Director, UNESCO World Heritage Centre)

Nature – Culture Linkages, Ms Karin Helms (Representative of the International Federation of Landscape Architects (IFLA) in Europe)

Ms Helms started her contribution with a recap of IFLA's history. IFLA was founded on 1948 to face the emergencies caused by the aftermaths of World War II and was recognised by UNESCO for its work in 1965. Today, it represents 77 countries around the world.

In the frame of IFLA's work, heritage is conceived as a link between nature and culture. These linkages are understood as a way to share opportunities and to build synergies across sectors. Thus, interdisciplinary teams, municipalities and residents are involved in the preservation of landscapes under the motto "preservation through development".

Ms Helms presented different examples of work, such as:

- The case of rural areas of Folleville, Picardie (France), a landscape project based on the creation of a pedestal for medieval ruins.
- The project "Girona's shores" commissioned by the Municipality of Girona (Spain), with the firm EMF Landscape Architecture as the coordinating team. This project aimed to increase the paths and links of the natural fitting of Girona and mark the natural sites by longstanding cultural connections and biocultural heritage through a geo-historical understanding of the territory. In the meantime, the public space of the city has grown to fit the needs of locals during the pandemic. The project involved residents in the management of local events (maintenance services, designer facilitator, research proposal, communitarian activation) to empower the local community of Girona.

The work formula employed by IFLA is designed around three levels of action: to understand, to explore, and to materialize.

Ms Helms stressed the central role of geo-history in the initiatives of IFLA, as the understanding/grounding process for projects through the interpretation of what is already there, both visible and invisible landscape.

She concluded by introducing the MED_NET collective, a group of IFLA Europe which focuses on transborder ideas and cross-cultural learning (presented through the case of Aigues Mortes (France)).

For IFLA it is essential to define new methods and strategies to support nature and culture, in line with the World Heritage Convention, and to influence a shift in cultural and practical terms.

Contribution by Mr Thomas Vonier (President, International Union of Architects (UIA))

Mr Vonier briefly introduced the history of UIA, which started its activity after World War II and its cooperation with the UNESCO World Heritage Centre since the 1990s.

He stressed the main mission of the Union, to provide to every community the principles and guidelines for responsible growth. In particular, the Euro-Mediterranean area presents specific characteristics, with its abundance of World Heritage sites, and the intensification of threats such as climate change, mass tourism in historic cities, and pressure from organic growth, among others, in recent years.

Mr Vonier called for collaboration across institutions and regions, since cities can learn from each other to build a better future.

To conclude, Mr Vonier pointed out that UIA contributed to the production of the Architecture guide to the UN 17 Sustainable Development Goals, a guide illustrating tools for urban planning and design to responsibly reach these goals.

Case study: *George Town, Malaysia*, Mr Hamdan Majeed (Executive Director, Think City Malaysia)

Mr Majeed introduced the participants to Think City's approach to the UNESCO Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape and its implementation, especially in relation to the case study of George Town, Malaysia. Think City is an impact-focused organization aiming to make cities more livable. It is specialized in four areas of work: placemaking, resilience, analytics, conservation and adaptive reuse. Its capacity-building is based on know-how, experimentation and analytics.

The work conducted in Malaysia aimed to renew, adapt and reposition George Town's urban centre. George Town is a port city founded in 1786 to serve British interest in South-East Asia and it increasingly grew since then. Its urban fabric presents a mix of Indian, European and Asian architecture that is currently in a process of decay due to the loss of its international port status. Historical areas of the city were inscribed as UNESCO World Heritage in 2008. Since then, culture has become a big driver for investment.

Mr Majeed explained that the Municipality of George Town collaborated with GTCDC (George Town Conservation and Development Corporation), the Aga Khan Foundation and Think City to start the reactivation process following an evidence-based approach around five steps of action: discover, design, demonstrate, document and disseminate.

Moreover, a strategic Master Plan and site Management Plan involved the selection of specific areas, their planning and design, the implementation of dedicated Conservation and Management Plans, assessment and dissemination. The initiative was implemented not only through physical interventions, but also through content curation and programming, thanks to the creation of a museum and gallery network (MAGNET) to strengthen the local cultural economy.

Mr Majeed stressed the enormous impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the results of this initiative, which caused a true decline of opportunities.

The project has brought the rediscovery of the value of the urban core, the investment in cultural assets, and the importance of building and supporting local resilience. Developing a consistent holistic plan for the area was fundamental in order not to haphazardly invest in separate and unrelated interventions, but rather to look for support in partnerships, public consultation and community engagement. At the same time, pilot initiatives allowed experimentation in capacity building and in the combination of traditional practices of conservation with new technologies.

Case study: *World Heritage site Historic Site of Lyon, “Plan Local d’Urbanisme de la Métropole de Lyon – Patrimoines urbains et paysagers”*, Mr Philippe Lamy (Urban Coordinator in charge for the Historic Site of Lyon)

Mr Lamy started with the presentation of Lyon and its historic centre. In particular, he emphasized that different areas of the city correspond to different periods of urban development around the two rivers, architectural styles and urban planning.

He then outlined key points for the future development of the city of Lyon, which comprise the management of the metropolitan area (with the objective of creating a competitive historic centre for activities oriented to local communities and tourists), to strengthen the local economy, to build solidarity, e.g., fair housing for residents, and to implement effective actions to face environmental challenges.

Main heritage assets include the Hôtel Dieu sur la Rhône (particularly put in value through its renovation), the industrial heritage of the city and its reconversion, and the valorization of its different neighborhoods and their particular character and historic value.

Moreover, natural spaces are also central to urban adaptation. The different natural spaces around and inside the city are part of its character and heritage, and are at the same time in constant evolution to improve the quality of life of

local communities (contributing to biodiversity and bringing benefits to urban contexts).

Mr Lamy pointed out that the main tools and axes to support heritage management in the city include elements of thematic knowledge, the development and implementation of “green” and “blue” plans (around green and water zones), the structuring of urban planning as a combination of conservation and equitable and sustainable development, the implementation of a morphological analysis of the urban fabric to adapt the city and its landscape to the population growth without compromising the presence of green areas, the identification of heritage buildings and areas of interest to be effectively integrated into the planification of the city of tomorrow through the so-called “*périmètres de protection*” (protection boundaries) towards a sustainable development, and the compilation of an historic atlas of the city to track the architectural composition of its different areas.

These actions aim to make the city of Lyon inspiring for its locals and not only attractive to visitors, integrating an effective green transition, and the city multi-polar and not vertical.

Islamic Development Bank financing for urban cultural heritage: Muharraq Pearling Heritage Conservation and Urban Economic Revival Project in Bahrain, Mr Papa Abdoulaye SY (Global Lead Urban Development, Islamic Development Bank (IDB))

The city of Muharraq former capital of the country, now represents an authentic setting that is being preserved but struggles to maintain its economic role as a point of attraction and economic value. For this reason, in 2013 the Government of Bahrain asked for support from IDB to develop the “Pearling Path” project to reach socio-economic development through culture, the improvement of urban mobility, promotion and conservation of the city. The project was designed around the combination of renovation and new constructions.

The implementation plan of the project was structured around four steps: design, procurement, monitoring and evaluation. The main achievements of the project involved the conservation of the Southern and Northern areas of the city, the construction of a pedestrian bridge, a commercial gallery hall, new pathways and public spaces.

Mr SY pointed out that the main challenges faced during the implementation of the project included:

- Securing of owners' approval (through the implementation of community awareness programs and raising willingness for local collaboration and participation).
- Lack of capacity / expertise (mainly in the frame of heritage building conservation).
- Heavy procurement activities.

The key lessons learnt throughout the entire process comprehend the:

- Acquired capacity of effectively plan urban development at a macro level in combination with local economy development.
- Ability to properly design and plan urban works.
- Consciousness about the key role of coordination arrangements and implementation arrangements.
- Importance of effective communication.

The key role played by the presence of specialists in the project implementation team was also pointed out by Mr Sy, along with the opportunities generated by the involvement of the private sector in the implementation of public interest initiatives, as well as the contribution of public sector, and in particular the local government, in both, legal and planning support.

In conclusion, the importance of considering the impact of the projects on the natural environment and carrying out evaluation and monitoring throughout the entire process were highlighted as essential to the continuation of the project.

Urban Project and Restoration of Heritage, Ms Fatima Chioukh (Project-Team Leader, Division of Urban Development, Planning and Housing, Agence Française de Développement)

Ms Chioukh started her presentation introducing the approach of the *Agence Française de Développement* (AFD) to heritage projects. The AFD was created in 1941 and puts a focus on urban development, especially in the context of historic areas and their value. Residents are at the centre of any intervention plan, mainly when ensuring access to services and sustainable planning.

The core of the Agency's work concerns the promotion of sustainable development of urban areas while financially and technically supporting local actors and concerned stakeholders at both national and local scales, keeping a long-term focus on local identities and sustainable appeal.

She pointed out how actions for valorisation and renovation of buildings have always kept in mind the needs of local inhabitants trying to avoid gentrification and exclusively touristic uses of historic buildings.

Protection and rehabilitation of public buildings and heritage recently included actions carried out in Lebanon, such as empowering local actors, authorities and communities in support of specific needs.

Ms Chioukh highlighted the key areas of intervention of AFD: economic development, urban renewal (especially in secondary cities), and the support of fragile heritage sites while avoiding the 'museification' of historic areas.

To wrap up, the main objectives of AFD were pointed out, comprising the achievement of economic attractiveness for heritage centres, the strengthening

of social cohesion to improve living conditions of residents, and the support of commercial and craft assets.

Discussion

The final discussion was moderated by Ms Elizabeth Vines (ICCROM), who opened the debate highlighting that the variety of cases demonstrates how the HUL Recommendation can be effectively implemented, which is especially relevant this year for its 10th anniversary. All the cases presented from around the world focused especially on benefitting local communities and the engagement and initiative of residents. She pointed out the importance of keeping in mind that the threats caused by mass tourism could be back after the end of the COVID-19 pandemic along with the effects of the sanitary crisis. She concluded with a short summary of the covered topics and the main points highlighted in the different speeches and presented case studies.

Q&A

Three questions were asked by the audience:

- 1) *How do we interact with historic buildings and set priorities for conservation and restoration? Which are the main issues faced when starting restoration of historical buildings?*

Mr Hamdan Majeed (Think City Malaysia) proposed the example of the actions undertaken for some historical buildings in George Town, Malaysia, which focused on the facades on a first phase conducted by private actors, and later moved to the interiors (both living, working and commercial spaces) to encourage local inhabitants with limited financial capacities and workers to take advantage of the renewed spaces and their location in the city centre. Moreover, the ongoing restoration project involves complicated skills and techniques that can create some delay between the conception, design and implementation phases. At the same time, it is a priority that local inhabitants take advantage of these spaces.

- 2) Addressing the challenges related to the Covid pandemic and the period of limited tourism, some countries accelerated development to generate jobs and working opportunities:

- Mr Thomas Vonier (UIA) pointed out the importance of developing environments and infrastructures that make cities, and especially public space, more livable (e.g., parks, bike trails and pedestrian areas) as a lesson learnt from the sanitary crisis. In times of difficulty it is important to focus on the benefits to locals, especially when tourism is paused.
- Mr Philippe Lamy (Historic Site of Lyon) addressed the way the city of Lyon focused on enhancing biodiversity aiming to integrate natural spaces in urban areas, especially thinking about how we want to imagine cities for future generations who will experience the economic impacts of the pandemic and climate change crisis.

3) Addressing the relation between the COVID-19 pandemic crisis and historic urban areas:
How can the heritage architect improve the quality of the urban fabric to generate a product that respects the Outstanding Universal Value of World Heritage sites?

- In response, Mr Guido Licciardi (World Bank) suggested that it is important to look at three main elements for future actions:
 - To guide the economic sector to creative industries without requiring people to move and travel but supporting sustainability and resilience.
 - To aim at nourishing low impact tourism.
 - To focus on urban regeneration with a strong attention to local communities' benefits.

General and closing observations on previous presentations by Ms Jyoti Hosagrahar (Deputy Director, UNESCO World Heritage Centre)

To conclude, Ms Hosagrahar wrapped up the session addressing the key points discussed during the two days. First, she recalled the importance of the HUL Recommendation and its approach as key to the adaptive reuse and regeneration in historic cities, which must be a planned effort. At the same time, heritage impact assessment, management plans and city development plans

need to clearly identify what needs to be retained and what can be modified (for example, she mentioned the differences in architectural values, such as street fronts, courtyards or volumes). Ms Hosagrahar pointed out the crucial importance of integrated urban regeneration, which must include different functional layers of the city, such as infrastructure, housing, and economic development and involve its different governing bodies. To reach this goal, suitable governance structures should promote an integrated and interdisciplinary approach, rather than the standard siloed approach. In fact, regeneration and cultural projects must be used as an opportunity to improve environmental sustainability and promote sustainable development. She also addressed the critical role played by public spaces in our cities, both inside and outside historic centres, for instance, connections of the historic centres to city surroundings and the spaces between buildings, pedestrian streets and squares, as well as nature-culture linkages. This, it is important not to address regeneration in isolation, as sometimes happens with purely physical restoration projects. In this context, it is essential to focus not only on the dedication of historic centres to tourism (even if there is often a link between tourism and urban regeneration) but to be especially aware and avoid mass tourism.

Ms Hosagrahar recalled the essential need to engage local people and stakeholders to raise community awareness and sense of ownership, as well as social inclusion and affordability as keys to a positive social impact.

Moreover, more systematic investments in culture are needed, addressing culture as a central economic catalyst. Specific attention must be given to local infrastructures, use of local materials and traditional building technologies.

Ms Hosagrahar concluded by claiming that long term transformation requires a vision, solid planning and commitment to these ideals over time. Especially in times of crisis, as the COVID-19 pandemic, more emphasis should be put on digital education and marketing, actions to fight climate change and pushing towards a circular economy.

The session was closed with the final greetings of Ms Ayse Asya (UfM).

General Conclusions:

The main takeaways of the event can be synthesised as follows:

- Importance of HUL Recommendation approach is seen as key to the adaptive reuse and regeneration.
- Regeneration and adaptive reuse must be a planned effort.
- Assessment - management plans and city development plans need to identify what needs to be retained and what can be modified – if the value is in the street fronts or the courtyards or volumes.
- Integrated urban regeneration to include different aspects of the city and government departments, such as infrastructure, housing, economic development, etc.
- Suitable governance structures that promote an integrated, interdisciplinary approach rather than a siloed approach.
- We must use regeneration / cultural projects to improve environmental sustainability and promote sustainable development.
- Public spaces in our cities are critical both inside and outside the city– connections to the surrounding spaces as well as interior spaces that connect buildings, enhancing pedestrian streets.
- Nature culture linkages in not viewing regeneration in isolation as physical restoration.
- Focus not only on tourism especially mass tourism though there is often a link between tourism and urban regeneration.
- Local people and stakeholders need to be engaged – community awareness sense of ownership.
- Use of local and traditional building technologies and materials including for building and restoring infrastructure.
- Focus on emphasizing social inclusion, affordability, and positive social impact.
- Invest systematically in cultural heritage as an economic catalyst.
- In urban regeneration and adaptive reuse, emphasize on climate change and the circular economy.
- Consider long term projects so it is a commitment for transformation over time with a vision.