

Third UNESCO Member States consultation on the implementation of the 2011 Recommendation on Historic Urban Landscape - Glossary

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Built environment

“The built environment refers to human-made (versus natural) resources and infrastructure designed to support human activity, such as buildings, roads, parks, and other amenities.”

Source: 2011 UNESCO Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape, Appendix: Glossary of definitions.

Culture-based approach

A strategy that identifies cultural assets (in this case, historic urban areas including their monuments, built fabric, urban spaces, landscape elements, the distinctive character, significance, also museums, cultural and creative industries, festivals and cultural events, intangible cultural heritage, and traditional livelihoods) and develops actions revolving around them as the vector for socio-economic development (in the case of this survey, as seen in Section 1.6, “*integrate a culture-based approach into urban development in historic urban areas*”)

Historic urban area

“Historic urban areas, large and small, include cities, towns and historic centres or quarters, together with their natural and man-made environments. Beyond their role as historical documents, these areas embody the values of traditional urban cultures.”

Source: 1987 ICOMOS Washington Charter for the Conservation of Historic Towns and Urban Areas.

Historic urban landscape

“8. The historic urban landscape is the urban area understood as the result of a historic layering of cultural and natural values and attributes, extending beyond the notion of “historic centre” or “ensemble” to include the broader urban context and its geographical setting.

9. This wider context includes notably the site’s topography, geomorphology, hydrology and natural features, its built environment, both historic and contemporary, its infrastructures above and below ground, its open spaces and gardens, its land use patterns and spatial organization, perceptions and visual relationships, as well as all other elements of the urban structure. It also includes social and cultural practices and values, economic processes and the intangible dimensions of heritage as related to diversity and identity.”

Source: 2011 UNESCO Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape, paragraphs 8 and 9.

Historic area / city

““Historic and architectural (including vernacular) areas” shall be taken to mean any groups of buildings, structures and open spaces including archaeological and palaeontological sites,

constituting human settlements in an urban or rural environment, the cohesion and value of which, from the archaeological, architectural, prehistoric, historic, aesthetic or sociocultural point of view are recognized. Among these “areas”, which are very varied in nature, it is possible to distinguish the following in particular: prehistoric sites, historic towns, old urban quarters, villages and hamlets as well as homogeneous monumental groups, it being understood that the latter should as a rule be carefully preserved unchanged.”

Source: 1976 UNESCO Recommendation Concerning the Safeguarding and Contemporary Role of Historic Areas, paragraph 1.

Intangible Cultural Heritage

“Practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills – as well as the instruments, objects, artefacts and cultural spaces associated therewith – that communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals recognize as part of their cultural heritage. This intangible cultural heritage, transmitted from generation to generation, is constantly recreated by communities and groups in response to their environment, their interaction with nature and their history, and provides them with a sense of identity and continuity, thus promoting respect for cultural diversity and human creativity.”

Source: 2003 UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, Article 2.

International cooperation between local authorities

Participation of municipalities and other stakeholders in international programmes for knowledge-sharing, action-planning and such.

Landscape approach

“The landscape approach is a framework for making landscape-level conservation decisions. The landscape approach helps to reach decisions about the advisability of particular interventions (such as a new road or plantation), and to facilitate the planning, negotiation and implementation of activities across a whole landscape.”

Source: 2011 UNESCO Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape, Annex: Glossary of Definitions

(based on International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), and the World Wildlife Fund (WWF)).

Setting

“The setting of a heritage structure, site or area is defined as the immediate and extended environment that is part of, or contributes to, its significance and distinctive character.”

Source: 2005 ICOMOS Xi’an Declaration on the Conservation of the Settings of Heritage Structures, Sites and Areas, paragraph 1.

Cultural significance

“Cultural significance means aesthetic, historic, scientific, social or spiritual value for past, present or future generations. Cultural significance is embodied in the place itself, its fabric, setting, use, associations, meanings, records, related places and related objects. Places may have a range of values for different individuals or groups.”

Source: Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance (Burra Charter 2013), article 1.2

Local

At the Municipal level, or the level of the city or settlement. In the case of World Heritage properties, and depending on the size of the property in relation to the rest of the town, this term could mean “site level”.

Living heritage

“The term ‘Living Heritage’ is linked to ‘communities’ and the ‘continuity’ of traditions and practices.” For more information, see “Intangible Cultural Heritage”.

Source: ICCROM, [PCA15_Annexe 1 \(iccrom.org\)](#)

National

Country level.

National and regional cooperation between local authorities

Participation of municipalities and other stakeholders in national and regional programmes for knowledge-sharing, action-planning and such.

Outstanding Universal Value (OUV)

Outstanding Universal Value means cultural and/or natural significance which is so exceptional as to transcend national boundaries and to be of common importance for present and future generations of all humanity. As such, the permanent protection of this heritage is of the highest importance to the international community as a whole. The [World Heritage] Committee defines the criteria for the inscription of properties on the World Heritage List.

Source: Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention, 2021, paragraph 49.

Participatory decision-making processes

Participatory decision-making processes are “specific methods employed to achieve active participation by all members of a group in a decision-making process. The approach can be used for most issues and should give equal opportunities for everybody involved. The primary goal is to create productive discussions to develop positive solutions”.

Source: [Participatory Processes Methods \(world-changers.org\)](http://www.world-changers.org)

People-centred spaces

Places designed and managed taking into account people’s needs, behaviours, activities, etc. with their wellbeing as the main aim.

“UNESCO believes that a people-centred approach, based on mutual respect and open dialogue among cultures, can lead to lasting and inclusive sustainable development. Such an approach to development that places people, their choices and their freedoms at its heart is particularly needed in our cities, now home to the majority of the world’s population.” Source: [Culture: urban future: global report on culture for sustainable urban development](#), UNESCO, 2016, p. 130.

“People and their well-being should be at the centre of local development initiatives to achieve sustainable cities and fulfil human aspiration. Improving the liveability of cities depends on linking culture with transformations in the city’s physical and social infrastructure.” Source: [Culture: urban future: global report on culture for sustainable urban development](#), UNESCO, 2016, p. 132.

Place

“A geographically defined area. It may include elements, objects, spaces and views. Place may have tangible and intangible dimensions. Place has a broad scope and includes natural and cultural features. Place can be large or small: for example, a memorial, a tree, an individual building or group of buildings, the location of an historical event, an urban area or town, a cultural landscape, a garden, an industrial plant, a shipwreck, a site with in situ remains, a stone arrangement, a road or travel route, a community meeting place, a site with spiritual or religious connections.”

Source: Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance (Burra Charter), para 1.1

Regional

Concerning sub-national regions within a country (e.g., State, Province, Autonomous Region, Canton, Laender, or other sub-national administrative areas).

Urban area

City, town or settlement in which human communities organise to develop shared services and infrastructures. It may include one or several local administrations or municipalities.

Urban conservation

“Urban conservation is not limited to the preservation of single buildings. It views architecture as but one element of the overall urban setting, making it a complex and multifaceted discipline. By definition, then, urban conservation lies at the very heart of urban planning.”

Source: 2011 UNESCO Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape. Appendix: Glossary of definitions.

Urban heritage

All the elements of urban areas or urban built environment that bear significance for past, present or future generations.

Tangible urban heritage comprises three main categories:

- Monumental heritage of exceptional cultural value;
- Non-exceptional heritage elements but present in a coherent way with a relative abundance;
- New urban elements to be considered (for instance):
 - The urban built form;
 - The open space: streets, public open spaces;
 - Urban infrastructures: material networks and equipment.

Source: 2011 UNESCO Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape. Appendix: Glossary of definitions, based on the European Union research report N° 16 (2004), *Sustainable development of Urban historical areas through and active Integration within Towns – SUIT*.