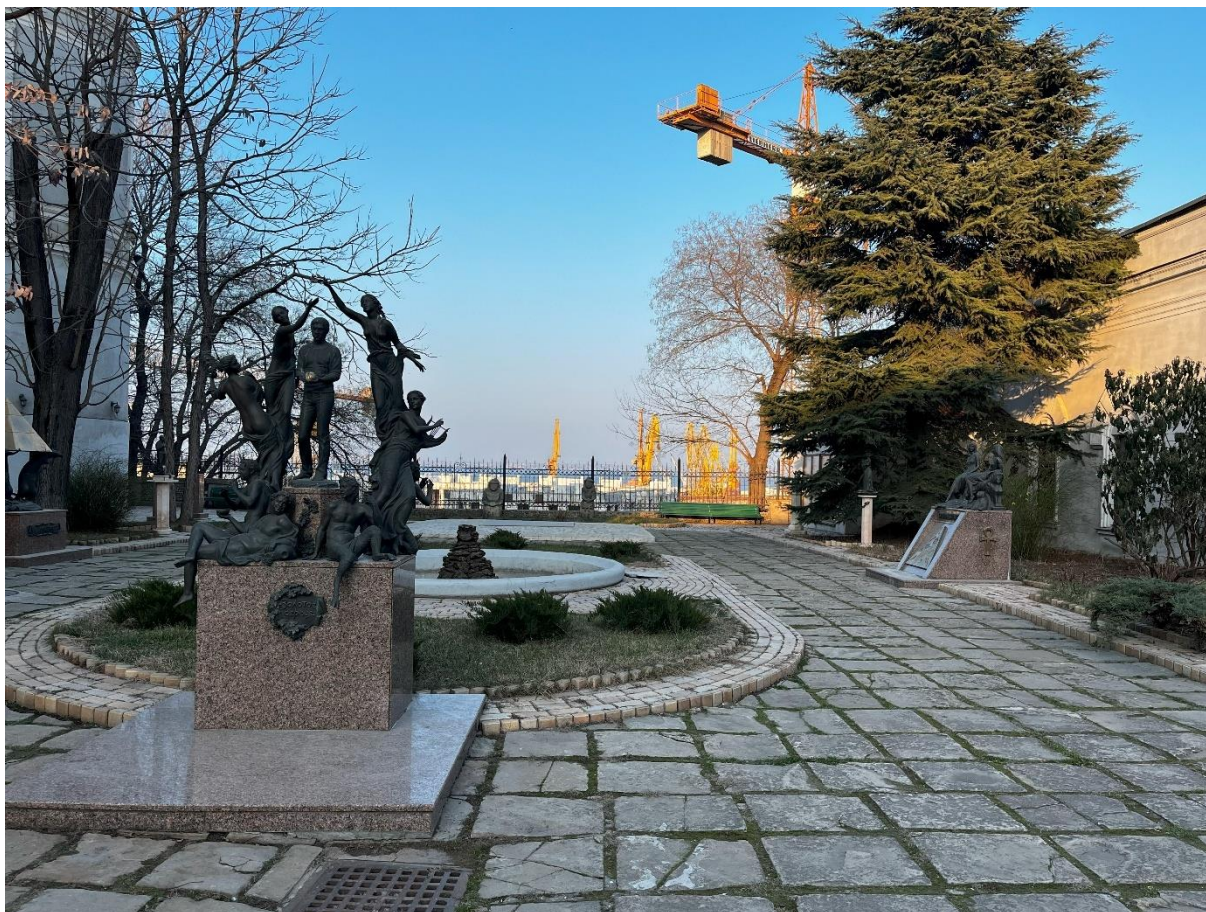


**REPORT**  
**of the joint UNESCO World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS**  
**Reactive Monitoring mission**  
**to the World Heritage property ‘The Historic Centre of Odesa’**  
**(Ukraine)**  
**10-14 February 2025**



*Photo 1: View of the Port of Odesa from the Gardens of the Odesa Literary Museum, © UNESCO*

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The mission acknowledges the valuable support of the Odesa Regional Administration, particularly Olena Vorobyova, Deputy Director, Department of Culture, Nationalities, Religions and Protection of Cultural Heritage Objects, for her time, dedication, and patience in addressing the team's numerous questions.

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Finally, the mission expresses particular gratitude to its interpreter, Anastasiia Neustroieva, without whom this work would not have been possible.

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY AND LIST OF RECOMMENDATIONS**

From 10 to 14 February 2025, a joint UNESCO World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring Mission assessed the state of conservation of the Historic Centre of Odesa. This World Heritage property was inscribed in 2023 and simultaneously placed on the List of World Heritage in Danger due to the ongoing war in Ukraine. The mission reviewed the overall state of conservation of the property, including factors and conservation issues affecting its Outstanding Universal Value (OUV), such as integrity, protection, and management. It also evaluated the progress made by the State Party in implementing the World Heritage Committee's recommendations at the time of inscription.

The mission confirmed that the property continues to face significant threats arising from the ongoing full-scale invasion of Ukraine. Despite damage caused by the war and longstanding structural weaknesses in conservation and management—further compounded by the war—the Historic Centre of Odesa has retained its defining characteristics, including its distinctive cultural identity, vibrant urban fabric, and significant historical value. Nonetheless, substantial challenges remain, beyond those directly linked to the war. These include fragmented legal protection, weak institutional arrangements, incomplete inventories, and limited resources for conservation and management.

The mission identified several urgent priorities:

- Identifying the attributes that convey the property's OUV, which are essential for effective protection and management;
- Developing a comprehensive inventory and condition assessment of historic buildings and other structural elements within the World Heritage property and its immediate setting;
- Strengthening the planning system to manage new developments appropriately;
- Revising the draft Management Plan to incorporate risk preparedness and emergency response, and establishing a functional, adequately resourced, and participatory management structure;
- Delineating an appropriate buffer zone to support the protection of the property's OUV;
- Developing and submitting a Desired State of Conservation for the Removal of the Property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR), along with corresponding corrective measures.

A list of detailed recommendations can be found below.

### **List of recommendations**

#### **ISSUE 1: OVERALL STATE OF CONSERVATION AND PROGRESS MADE IN CONSERVATION PROGRAMMES**

##### **1. Identification of attributes conveying the World Heritage property's Outstanding Universal Value**

- 1.1. The mission recommends that the identification of the broader thematic frameworks and key attributes that underpin the property's Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) be treated as a matter of urgency. The Odesa City Council, with the support of the MCSC and the Regional Administration, should develop and formally adopt a comprehensive programme to guide this process. This programme must be adequately resourced, both financially and in terms of skilled personnel. Where appropriate, international technical assistance should be actively pursued.
- 1.2. The identification of attributes should be carried out in clearly defined phases and through an inclusive, participatory approach. A sound conceptual understanding of the

role and purpose of attributes in expressing and supporting OUV should underpin the entire process, ensuring coherence and credibility in outcomes.

- 1.3. This process must be closely aligned with legal clarification of the property's boundaries and scope of protection, as defined by national heritage legislation.
- 1.4. The identification of attributes must be grounded in a thorough assessment of the property's current state of conservation, supported by targeted studies. These should inform the inventory, mapping, and documentation of attributes in a way that fully respects their character, scale, and significance. This work – comprising inventory, documentation, and analytical processes – should commence without delay.

## **2. Conservation strategy and programmes**

- 2.1. Existing conservation programmes should be reviewed, updated where necessary, and continued where still relevant and effective.
- 2.2. The Odesa City Council, in collaboration with the MCSC and relevant national and regional authorities, should develop a comprehensive long-term conservation strategy based on a detailed assessment of the current condition of the property and a robust risk analysis. This strategy must clearly define priorities and address both urban and building-level conservation. It should include guidance on the use of traditional construction techniques and materials, establish funding mechanisms, and define procedures for approvals and implementation.
- 2.3. The strategy must be informed by an impact assessment of recent developments within the World Heritage property and its buffer zone, focusing on their effects on the property's integrity. Where necessary, mitigation measures should be adopted to reduce adverse impacts.
- 2.4. The conservation strategy should be translated into well-funded and practical programmes, supported by detailed thematic guidelines. These guidelines should cover interventions at multiple scales, including: urban scale (block structure, building typologies, street patterns, skylines, key views, industrial and socio-economic features, and underground quarries.) and building scale (architectural composition, structural systems, surface finishes, decorative elements, historical fabric, and craftsmanship).
- 2.5. A targeted public awareness campaign should be integrated into the strategy to engage owners and users of historic buildings, promoting shared responsibility for conservation and encouraging good practices.
- 2.6. Grant programmes or other financial mechanisms supporting private owners of monuments in conservation work should be designed and implemented within the legal heritage protection framework.
- 2.7. The mission also recommends amending compensation policies to provide financial assistance to residents living in war-affected monuments, ensuring support without compromising the integrity of the properties.

## **ISSUE 2: ASSESSMENT OF LEGAL ADVANCEMENTS IN REGULATING THE INTEGRATED PROTECTION ZONE AND INTEGRATING HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENTS**

### **3. Legal protection**

- 3.1. The mission recommends the State Party conduct a thorough analysis of existing regulations and clarify governance structures and responsibilities related to the implementation of the World Heritage Convention, particularly concerning the management of historic city centres. Addressing these legal issues should be a priority, alongside strengthening the planning system to manage new developments



effectively. Introducing special or transitional regulations, coupled with an agreement between central government and city authorities, may serve as an interim solution pending statutory revisions.

- 3.2. A participatory and inclusive approach to managing 'The Historic Centre of Odesa' is strongly recommended. This approach should balance heritage protection with the everyday needs and aspirations of city inhabitants. Protection must be understood holistically – focused on preserving the OUV of the property as a whole rather than narrowly on individual buildings. This integrated vision will require legislative reform, as the current legal framework mainly addresses individual monuments rather than urban heritage ensembles. UNESCO's Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape may serve as guidance, and the 'historic settlement' legal category could form the basis for developing further regulatory tools.
- 3.3. It is recommended that the Odesa City Council, in cooperation with the Regional Administration, revises and expands the list of cultural objects, establishing clear criteria and preparing thorough documentation for inclusion in the State Register of Immovable Monuments. This should be coordinated with the identification of attributes of the property's OUV. (See *Recommendations 1.1 and 1.3*).
- 3.4. The boundaries of the World Heritage property and its buffer zone, once established and approved by the World Heritage Committee, must be reflected in official records and integrated into cadastral documentation to protect the property from inappropriate future development.
- 3.5. In the context of the ongoing war, it is essential to develop, as a matter of priority, a policy for the rehabilitation, repair, and reconstruction of historic buildings that fully reflects World Heritage requirements. This should be accompanied by the implementation of appropriate legal instruments to prevent potential misuse that could compromise the integrity and authenticity of the Historic Centre of Odesa. In doing so, the State Party may draw upon relevant international charters, including the ICOMOS and ICCROM *Guidance on Post-Disaster and Post-Conflict Recovery and Reconstruction for Heritage Places of Cultural Significance and World Heritage Cultural Properties*<sup>1</sup>.

#### **4. Protection regimes and regulations**

- 4.1. The technical documentation, notably the Historical and Architectural Reference Plan, should be updated by the Odesa City Council to reflect the requirements for World Heritage property. Following the identification of attributes and factors affecting their integrity and authenticity, appropriate protection regimes should be incorporated into Odesa's General Plan by the municipality.
- 4.2. The State Party should consistently apply paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention, informing the World Heritage Committee of any intention to undertake or authorise major restoration or new construction projects within the protected area. This approach should be explicitly incorporated into the State Party's development legislation to ensure mandatory application. Procedures and guidance should be subject to prior consultation with Advisory Bodies and approval by the World Heritage Committee as part of the DSOCR process.
- 4.3. The State Party should develop and integrate consistent requirements into Ukrainian legislation for the use of OUV-focused impact assessments in World Heritage properties, in accordance with the Law on the Protection of Cultural Heritage.

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<sup>1</sup> Available at <https://www.iccrom.org/publication/guidance-post-disaster-and-post-conflict-recovery-and-reconstruction-heritage-places>.

- 4.4. Given the size and complexity of the property, the updated management plan should include clear guidance on key criteria to identify potential impacts at the earliest stages of new developments. This will enable initial assessments of development proposals to determine whether notification to the World Heritage Centre is required.
- 4.5. The State Party must ensure that all proposed infrastructure projects located north of the World Heritage property, particularly in the marshland between the Khadzhybey Limans and the Black Sea near the proposed buffer zone, are subject to comprehensive Heritage Impact Assessments focused on the property's OUV. These assessments must be conducted prior to any planning approval, with the objective of identifying and mitigating potential adverse impacts on the property's setting and integrity.
- 4.6. The State Party should invest in the development and implementation of documentation standards for interventions in historic buildings. This should be accompanied by a licensing system for professionals authorised to carry out conservation work on monuments, supported by opportunities for formal education in the field and other forms of capacity-building.

## **5. Management arrangements**

- 5.1. The MCSC, in cooperation with the Odesa City Council and the Regional Administration, should take appropriate steps to resolve issues concerning legal responsibility and governance of the Historic Centre of Odesa World Heritage property.
- 5.2. If necessary, legal special or transitional regulations should be made to facilitate the designation of a dedicated management body for the World Heritage property. An ad hoc task force, including representatives from relevant departments of the Odesa City Council, State authorities, and key stakeholders, should be established immediately to prepare basic data and revise the management plan.
- 5.3. In designing new heritage protection legislation and enhancing existing protection measures for World Heritage properties, the State Party is encouraged draw directly on the findings of the *Key Policy Issues: Immovable Cultural Heritage Analysis*. The review process should be guided by international best practices, including the *World Heritage Resource Manual: Enhancing Our Heritage Toolkit 2.0 (EoH 2.0)*, which should be adopted as a practical reference for implementation.
- 5.4. Mapping existing ownership and management structures is essential. This process should identify all stakeholders, define their roles, and support the design of an effective organisational model for World Heritage management. It should also inform cooperation strategies and the development of communication tools. Ideally, under the City Council's leadership, this preparatory work should commence before formally designating a management body to ensure a collaborative and timely approach to both the development and future implementation of the management plan.
- 5.5. The revision of the management plan should actively incorporate participatory methodologies, ensuring that diverse voices are represented in the decision-making process. The UNESCO Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape should be used as a guiding reference throughout this process. The effective management of the World Heritage property requires the immediate involvement of key stakeholders and the establishment of a collaborative governance framework. To avoid the entrenchment of inaccurate assumptions or interpretations, this inclusive approach should begin without delay.



ISSUE 3: TOOLS TO ASSESS AND MONITOR THE STATE OF CONSERVATION OF THE PROPERTY AND IDENTIFICATION OF TANGIBLE AND INTANGIBLE ASPECTS OF THE CITY'S MULTI-ETHNIC AND MULTICULTURAL HERITAGE

**6. Inventory of historic buildings and other heritage assets within the boundaries of 'The Historic Centre of Odesa' and its immediate setting**

- 6.1. A comprehensive inventory and condition assessment of historic buildings, courtyards, trees, and underground structures within the World Heritage property and its immediate setting should be undertaken as a matter of priority. This process must be informed by archival research and detailed on-site surveys and should be directly correlated with the identification and documentation of attributes that convey the property's OUV. (*see Recommendations 1.1 and 1.4*)
- 6.2. Inventories and other sources of information form the basis for designing activities and setting priorities, including risk preparedness and emergency responses, which are especially important during wartime. Given the broad meaning of heritage inventory – both from an urban and individual structure perspective – and considering the current emergency situation and property size, the mission recommends systematic, high-quality photographic documentation of building facades and other landmarks in the historic centre. This should be complemented by aerial photography documenting rooftops (to complement existing satellite imagery), courtyards, and structures hidden within blocks, which represents a pragmatic approach.
- 6.3. The simplified inventory should then be supplemented by the existing architectural inventory of buildings and structures, gradually updated and expanded with new documentation.
- 6.4. It is necessary to develop a programme, set priorities, and phase the implementation accordingly. Relevant financial and human resources should be guaranteed by the Odesa City Council, supported if necessary by national programmes.
- 6.5. The mission also identifies the necessity of initiating a comprehensive study documenting and analysing Odesa's multicultural character, both historically and in contemporary life. This study should contribute to defining the attributes underpinning the property's OUV and inform its protection and management.
- 6.6. A state of conservation monitoring system, based on clearly defined indicators, should be developed and integrated into the property's management system and the revised management plan. This system should correspond with existing monitoring activities undertaken by authorities at city and regional levels (e.g. environmental monitoring).

**7. Dissemination of information about the World Heritage status of 'The Historic Centre of Odesa'**

- 7.1. The Statement of OUV should be translated into Ukrainian and made widely available to key stakeholders and the public. Communicating its content and the legal status of the World Heritage property will enhance understanding of the property's values and support informed engagement in its protection and management.
- 7.2. An interpretation strategy based on the Statement of OUV should be developed and implemented accordingly.

#### ISSUE 4: REVISION OF THE DRAFT MANAGEMENT PLAN TO INCLUDE DISASTER, CLIMATE CHANGE AND OTHER RISK PREPAREDNESS MEASURES, AS WELL AS IMPLEMENTATION MEASURES FOR EMERGENCY RESPONSES

##### **8. Risk identification and development of preparedness and emergency response plans**

- 8.1. Concise and clearly structured planning documents for both the World Heritage property and the wider city should be developed. These documents should follow a step-by-step format to ensure effective implementation, regular monitoring, timely updating, and overall coherence in urban and heritage management.
- 8.2. A comprehensive hazard assessment for the Historic Centre of Odesa should be conducted, identifying potential threats such as natural disasters, climate-related risks, and war-related vulnerabilities.
- 8.3. Risk identification and the development of emergency preparedness and response protocols should be integrated into relevant municipal and national regulations. This process should align with international best practices and frameworks, ensuring that the Historic Centre of Odesa is resilient and well-protected. (see *Recommendation 2.7*)

#### ISSUE 5: ESTABLISHMENT OF AN ADEQUATE BUFFER ZONE

- 9.1. An appropriate buffer zone that supports protection of the property's OUV should be delineated. Any modification of existing buffer zone boundaries should be preceded by comprehensive historical, spatial, and functional analyses, and carried out through a transparent and participatory consultation process. The definition of the buffer zone should be accompanied by the development of differentiated regulations tailored to its various sectors. It is essential that the boundaries of the World Heritage property and its buffer zone are officially registered in the national cadastre and integrated into land-use planning documentation.
- 9.2. A minor boundary modification should be submitted to the World Heritage Centre by 1 February 2026 for evaluation by ICOMOS and decision by the World Heritage Committee, in accordance with paragraph 107 of the Operational Guidelines and following the procedure outlined in paragraph 164.

#### DESIRED STATE OF CONSERVATION FOR REMOVAL FROM THE LIST OF WORLD HERITAGE IN DANGER

- 10.1. Develop and formally submit a DSOCR from the List of World Heritage in Danger, as required by the Operational Guidelines. This process should include, but not be limited to, the following key elements:
  - Identification and mapping of tangible and intangible attributes related to the property's OUV;
  - Strengthening and updating of the legal framework for heritage protection, ensuring alignment with World Heritage requirements and the needs of local residents;
  - Expanding and improving the protection of historical cultural objects/sites aligned with the identification of the attributes underlying the World Heritage property's OUV;
  - Compilation of detailed inventories and establishment of reliable data sources through ongoing monitoring and research;
  - Formulation of strategies for temporary stabilisation and repair during the ongoing war, and for full rehabilitation, repair and reconstruction following the cessation of hostilities;

- Development and approval of appropriate policies for rehabilitation, repair and reconstruction by the World Heritage Committee;
- Improvement of maintenance practices and enforcement of higher conservation standards;
- Inclusion of disaster risk management, climate adaptation, and emergency response measures in the revised management plan;
- Reinforcement of urban planning instruments and building regulations to ensure effective development control;
- Finalisation of appropriate buffer zone boundaries and implementation of an effective, adequately resourced management system.

10.2. Establish a dedicated inter-institutional working group to lead the development of the DSOCR and its accompanying corrective measures. This group should include representatives from all relevant levels of government and possess the necessary expertise and authority across the thematic areas outlined above.

10.3. Fully leverage the technical assistance available from the World Heritage Centre, the Advisory Bodies, and the World Heritage Fund. Use the DSOCR process not only to fulfil statutory obligations under the Convention, but also as a strategic opportunity to coordinate and attract international support for the conservation and management of 'The Historic Centre of Odesa' during and after the war.

Overall, the mission underlined that while the war significantly exacerbates existing and potential risks to the property, many structural issues predate the war and require sustained, coordinated action. The State Party is strongly encouraged to draw on available international technical assistance and funding, use the DSOCR process as a strategic planning framework, and ensure broad stakeholder engagement to support the effective protection, management, and revitalisation of 'The Historic Centre of Odesa'.

## I. THE PROPERTY

The Historic Centre of Odesa, part of the Black Sea port city developed on the site of Khadzhybei, is a densely built-up area, planned according to classicism canons, characterized by regular square plots division, two- to four-storey buildings and wide perpendicular streets lined with trees. Historic buildings reflect the rapid economic development of the city in the 19th and early 20th centuries. The historic city centre includes theatres, bridges, monuments, religious buildings, schools, private palaces and tenement houses, clubs, hotels, banks, shopping centres, warehouses, stock exchanges and other public and administrative buildings designed by architects and engineers, mostly from Italy in the early years, but also of other nationalities. Eclecticism is the dominant feature of the historic city centre's architecture. The site bears witness to the city's highly diverse ethnic and religious communities, representing an outstanding example of intercultural exchanges and the growth of multicultural and multi-ethnic Eastern European cities of the 19th century.

The Historic Centre of Odesa was inscribed on the World Heritage List in 2023 by Decision **18 EXT.COM 5.2** of the World Heritage Committee on the basis of the following criteria:

- **Criterion (ii):** The historic centre of Odesa represents an important interchange of human values within Eastern Europe through its heterogeneous architectural styles, developed during its rapid growth in the 19th century, that reflect the coexistence of many cultures and the combination of influences characteristic of the border area of Europe and Asia.
- **Criterion (iv):** The historic centre of Odesa is an outstanding “time capsule” of the 19th-century urban planning, with heterogeneous buildings mostly from the second half of the 19th century and the early 20th century, which reflects both the exceptionally fast growth of the town, based on the prosperity generated by the Industrial Revolution, and its notable diversity.

A short description of the property, along with the justification for its inscription on the World Heritage List – including the selection of criteria, assessment of integrity and authenticity, and the requirements for protection and management – is provided in the Statement of Outstanding Universal Value (SOUV) adopted by the Committee at the time of inscription. The Statement, annexed to this report, serves as the baseline for the property's protection, management, and the monitoring of their effectiveness. It also forms a background document for the Reactive Monitoring mission report.

By the same decision, the Historic Centre of Odesa was inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger. The reasons for the Committee's decision are summarised in the ICOMOS evaluation<sup>2</sup> of the nomination, in which the current war in Ukraine was considered as the major threat. At the time of inscription, the Committee acknowledged that, while the city's urban design has evolved over time, its original structure – including the grid layout and its connection to the port and the sea – remains clearly recognisable, the survival of a substantial number of 19th-century buildings within the modified boundaries aligned with the Integrated Protection Zone set out in Odesa's General Plan, contributes to the property's OUV. Despite this, the Committee expressed concern over the vulnerability of the property's integrity and authenticity. It noted that, although key buildings appear to remain in satisfactory condition, there is a lack of effective planning controls and conservation measures. This had left the historic urban fabric – particularly the spaces behind main street façades – at risk from inappropriate development and inadequate interventions.

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<sup>2</sup> Contained in Document [WHC-23/18EXT.COM/INF.5A](https://whc.unesco.org/doc/12042/annex/1/annex1_10_en.pdf)

The existing legal and institutional framework for heritage protection, including national legislation and municipal-level responsibilities, provides a foundation for managing the property. However, the Committee found that further improvements were needed. These include strengthening the management system to ensure coordinated and consistent protection of all attributes underpinning the property's OUV, developing systematic monitoring tools, and enhancing the capacity for risk preparedness and emergency response. The Committee further urged the State Party to consider expanding the buffer zone to better protect the setting of the historic centre, to reinforce legal protections, and to integrate Heritage Impact Assessments into development procedures. It also highlighted the need to continue and prioritise conservation efforts, particularly for buildings at risk, and to develop a comprehensive interpretation policy that reflects the city's multi-ethnic and multicultural heritage. Revisions to the draft management plan were also encouraged, particularly to address climate change, disaster preparedness, and emergency planning.

The World Heritage property covers an area of 618.54 hectares in the historic centre of Odesa, adjacent to the port, with which it has long been spatially and functionally linked. The current buffer zone covers an area of 618.80 hectares.

Odesa, a city of almost one million inhabitants on the Black Sea coast, serves as the administrative capital of Odesa Municipality, Odesa District (*raion*) and Odesa Region (*oblast*). Since the mid-19th century, its coastal location has made it a popular holiday destination in Ukraine and Eastern Europe.

The city is home to the Port of Odesa and Pivdennyi Port (also known as the South Port), a major oil terminal located on the outskirts of the city. In addition, the nearby port of Chornomorsk, located south-west of Odesa in the same district, contributes to the region's status as a major transport hub, with all three ports connected to the national railway network.

The property is protected under local regulations set out in the 2008 General Plan of Odesa. Located in the central zone of the city – home to the main administrative, public, commercial and cultural institutions – it benefits from the designation of an Integrated Protection Zone. The boundaries of the property were established in alignment with the Historical and Architectural Reference Plan of Odesa, developed in 2007 by the Institute of Monument Protection Research under the Ministry of Culture of Ukraine. This plan forms an integral part of the General Plan of Odesa, which was adopted by the City Council in 2015 and subsequently approved by the then Ministry of Culture and Tourism. Additionally, selected buildings and complexes within the property are listed in the State Register of Immovable Monuments of Ukraine and are protected under national legislation, notably the Law on the Protection of Cultural Heritage.

The report of Ukraine for the World Heritage property 'The Historic Centre of Odesa', submitted in July 2023 under the Third Cycle of Periodic Reporting by the State Party of Ukraine, identified multiple threats to the property, including urban development (residential and commercial), maritime transport infrastructure, major utilities, socio-demographic changes and the effects of war. It also identified pressures from limited financial and human resources and the low impact of research activities. Despite these threats, the State Party reported that the authenticity and integrity of the site remained intact, although its OUV and key cultural attributes had been compromised due to the continued risk of drone and missile attacks during the ongoing full-scale invasion by the Russian Federation. Nevertheless, the State Party considered that the World Heritage designation was seen as a source of social cohesion and resilience for the local population.

## II. SUMMARY OF THE NATIONAL SYSTEM FOR THE PRESERVATION AND MANAGEMENT OF THE WORLD HERITAGE PROPERTY

General provisions for cultural heritage protection are established by the Law of Ukraine on Cultural Heritage Protection adopted in 2000. The MCSC of Ukraine is the highest authority in the sphere of cultural heritage, acting on behalf of the Cabinet of Ministers. It formulates and implements state policy on cultural heritage and directs the activities of state institutions related to culture and art. The Ministry is responsible for supervising and monitoring the protection of historic monuments. At the municipal level, the Department of International Relations, Culture and Marketing of the Odesa City Council is responsible for the protection and conservation of cultural heritage sites in compliance with regulations on historic conservation in urban planning.

The protection and management of the World Heritage property is governed by a comprehensive set of national laws and local regulations. These include the **Law on Culture**, the **Law on Cultural Heritage Protection** (2000) (with specific provisions for World Heritage sites introduced in 2018), the **Law on Urban Development Regulation**, the **Law on Environmental Impact Assessment**, the **Land Code**, the **Building Code** and the **Civil Code**. In addition, the **Law on Local Self-Government** (1997) plays a key role in enabling the implementation of the national heritage policy at the local level.

Approved by the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine, Decree No. 885 of 16 October summarises the key provisions of the Regulation on the MCSC, with particular focus on the Ministry's responsibilities in protecting cultural heritage, the historical and cultural environment, monuments, and historic sites. It also outlines how these provisions align with Ukraine's obligations under the World Heritage Convention. The MCSC is the central executive authority in Ukraine responsible for developing and implementing state policy for the protection of cultural heritage, preserving the historical and cultural environment including monuments and historic sites, issuing permits for research, restoration, and other interventions at heritage sites, and overseeing the maintenance of national heritage registers and cadastres. The Ministry also coordinates with regional authorities and institutions to ensure the effective implementation of heritage policies and ensures legal compliance and international coordination in line with global standards.

According to the Regulation, the MCSC drafts and updates legislation, protection regimes, and restoration standards. It coordinates the designation of protected zones and management plans, organises public outreach, and manages international cooperation mechanisms. The responsibilities of the MCSC under Decree No. 885 directly support the implementation of the World Heritage Convention. This includes the identification and documentation of heritage sites of OUV, providing legal and administrative protection through regulations and permits, reporting on the state of conservation and any damages to the World Heritage Centre, coordinating management plans for World Heritage properties and their buffer zones, and supporting stakeholder engagement alongside the sustainable management of heritage assets.

Under Decree No. 885, the MCSC is the key institution responsible for the World Heritage property 'The Historic Centre of Odesa'. It coordinates damage assessments, legal enforcement, the Management Plan, and the establishment of a Management Body and Supervisory Board, in compliance with international standards and Cabinet Resolution No. 805/2019.

The ongoing war in Ukraine has led to significant adjustments in the country's cultural heritage legislation, aimed at balancing the urgent need for emergency measures with the continued commitment to heritage protection standards. Notably, Cabinet of Ministers Resolution No. 1342, adopted on 15 November 2022, introduced procedures for carrying out specific types of work on cultural heritage sites under martial law. These include simplified authorisation processes for repair and conservation works intended to address damage resulting from hostilities.

The laws are available in English on the official portal of the Supreme Rada (Council) of Ukraine (*Verkhovna Rada*) at the following link: <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/en/>. However, it is important to note that the English versions may not reflect the most recent amendments.

1. **Law on Culture** (Official Journal of the Supreme Council of Ukraine, 2011, No. 24, art. 168, with amendments as of 2024)

Article 1 of the Law on Culture of Ukraine defines intangible cultural heritage as ‘customs, forms of expression, knowledge and skills handed down through generations and continuously reproduced by communities and groups. These practices shape their identity and continuity, and promote respect for cultural diversity and human creativity.’<sup>3</sup> The law recognises culture as a key element of the identity of Ukrainian people, applicable to all citizens regardless of nationality, and regulates the protection of cultural heritage. It provides for State funding for the documentation of both tangible and intangible cultural heritage and recognises World Heritage sites as national monuments of significance.

2. **Law on the Protection of Cultural Heritage** (Bulletin of the Supreme Council of Ukraine, 2000, No. 39, p. 333, with amendments as of 2021)

The 2000 Law on the Protection of Cultural Heritage designates World Heritage properties as ‘objects’ of national importance that require special protection. The boundaries and buffer zones of these ‘objects’ are clearly defined and recorded in the State Land Cadastre (Article 37-2). The law outlines the main objectives for ‘World Heritage objects’, including their identification, nomination, protection, promotion and dissemination. It also emphasises the integration of heritage protection into socio-economic development programmes, along with continuous monitoring to ensure compliance with international standards (Article 37-1).

The management of World Heritage properties in Ukraine is overseen by a body established or designated by the central executive authority responsible for the protection of cultural heritage. This body operates under a management plan approved by the central authority, which includes property boundaries, buffer zones, a description of its OUV, and specific conditions for the protection (Article 37-3). The management body is responsible for implementing measures to prevent damage, supervising work on the property or its buffer zone, monitoring its conservation status, carrying out scientific research and submitting annual reports to the central executive authority (Article 37-4).

A Supervisory Board, established by the central executive authority and formed in accordance with procedures established by the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine, monitors the conservation status of the ‘World Heritage objects’. The Board reviews the implementation of the Management Plan, resolves conflicts between development and conservation needs and makes recommendations on conservation strategies (Article 37-5).

The Law on the Protection of Cultural Heritage assigns heritage protection responsibilities to both monument owners and various levels of State administration. It sets out specific requirements and procedures, including provisions relating to the World Heritage Convention, the definition of World Heritage properties and OUV. The law grants World Heritage properties the status of nationally significant ‘objects’ with simultaneous incorporation of the obligations set by the World Heritage Convention as well as provisions established in the property’s management plan (article 37-2). In the case of the World Heritage property The Historic Centre of Odesa, the mission understands that the registration of this ‘cultural heritage object’ as a ‘monument of national importance’ has not yet been finalised. An amendment in 2018

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<sup>3</sup> All translations are the authors’ own and do not constitute official translations.



formalised these provisions, and Cabinet of Ministers Resolution No. 805 (2019) approved the procedure for establishing or designating management bodies for World Heritage properties.

The law also regulates the process of nomination to the World Heritage List, the protection and management of these sites, and the establishment of buffer zones. These zones are defined as areas that protect the integrity and authenticity of the property's OUV, within which appropriate use regimes are applied.

The MCSC has primary responsibility for World Heritage properties in Ukraine, including approval of documentation related to boundaries, functional regimes and land management plans for these 'objects'. It also approves scientific, design and land management documentation necessary to define the use and protection of World Heritage.

By law, a buffer zone is the area around a World Heritage property that protects the integrity and authenticity of its OUV. Within this zone, an appropriate use regime is established. Buffer zones should be delineated on the basis of relevant scientific and planning documentation based on research. Until the boundaries of the buffer zone are formally established at the national level, the boundaries set out in the nomination dossier should apply. Both the boundaries of the 'World Heritage object' and its buffer zone are required to be recorded in the State Land and Urban Planning Cadastre within one month of the decisions coming into force. In the case of the World Heritage property 'The Historic Centre of Odesa', the mission understands that this has not yet been completed.

The MCSC is empowered to prepare and approve management plans for these properties, monitor their implementation and ensure their protection. It can issue orders, grant permits for work on national monuments and impose financial sanctions for activities that threaten the OUV of a property or violate heritage protection laws. The MCSC is also required to report annually to the Cabinet of Ministers and the World Heritage Committee on the state of conservation of World Heritage properties<sup>4</sup>.

At the regional level, the District State Administration (DSA) is responsible for monuments of local importance. For national monuments, the DSA acts under the authority of the MCSC, concludes protection agreements and prepares proposals for the conservation, restoration, museumification and adaptation of cultural heritage objects. The DSA is also responsible for conducting research, educating the public and raising awareness of heritage protection in its region. In Odesa, this responsibility lies with the **Department of Culture, Nationalities, Religions and Protection of Cultural Heritage of the Odesa Regional Military Administration**.

The Law on the Protection of Cultural Heritage defines the following categories:

- Immovable and movable 'object': These include a building, a group of buildings or an area (urban object).
- Cultural heritage **monument**: An object listed in the State Register of Immovable Monuments of Ukraine (SRIM), which includes monuments of national and local significance. It constitutes a form of legal protection.

The subject of protection of a cultural heritage object must be determined during the procedure for granting protection. These are the characteristics or elements that determine the historical and cultural value, on the basis of which the object is recognised as a monument.

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<sup>4</sup> Under the World Heritage Convention, this requirement only applies to properties inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger.

Apart of SRIM, another form of legal protection<sup>5</sup> is a List of Historic Settlements of Ukraine, composed of **historic settlements** that have preserved their historic areas in whole or in part. The List is approved by the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine upon submission by the MCSC. The implementation of this protection which aims at sustaining their traditional character is overseen by an executive body established by the local council in coordination with the MCSC. Odesa's historic settlement is included in this list. The protection of historical settlements is implemented through land-use planning mechanisms and the designation of protection zones, within which a special regime of use is applied. Odesa's Integrated Protection Zone fulfils this legal requirement.

The law defines several types of interventions that can be carried out on protected properties, including:

- **Conservation:** Protecting the heritage from further deterioration and preserving its authenticity with **minimal intervention**.
- **Museumification:** Adaptation of cultural heritage objects for exhibition and public visitation.
- **Rehabilitation:** Restoring the cultural and functional properties (characteristics and parameters) of cultural heritage objects.
- **Repair:** Improving the technical condition and maintenance of the object without altering its characteristics.
- **Restoration:** Strengthening and preserving the physical condition, revealing key features and restoring lost or damaged elements to maintain the authenticity of the object.

For architectural monuments (listed buildings), restoration is the primary form of intervention. It involves building work and is subject to town planning, building and heritage standards.

For monuments, World Heritage 'objects' (properties), and historic settlements, the law provides for the possibility of establishing protection or buffer zones to safeguard the 'traditional character of their environment' (Article 32).

Owners of monuments, whether of local or national importance and regardless of the type of ownership, are required to enter into a 'protection agreement' with the relevant heritage authority. This agreement outlines the permitted use of the monument and, where necessary, based on technical assessments of its condition, specifies the nature and timing of interventions such as conservation, restoration, rehabilitation, museumification, repair or adaptation. The necessity and extent of these interventions are determined by the competent authority. Information on use regimes is recorded in the State Land Cadastre and, in the case of land use restrictions, also in urban planning documentation. If the owner does not fulfil his obligations, the state authorities can impose penalties or, in justified cases, take over the ownership of the monument.

It is important to note that current regulations prohibit advertising within World Heritage properties. In buffer zones, advertising may be permitted only with the approval of the MCSC. In addition, under national legislation, any urban, architectural or landscape transformation, land reclamation, road construction or earthworks within the World Heritage property or its buffer zone must be notified to the UNESCO World Heritage Centre, in line with paragraph 172 of the *Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention* and the implementation of the Committee's recommendations in such cases is mandatory.

The Management Plan for a World Heritage property is legally binding under the Law on the Protection of Cultural Heritage. The Plan sets out the strategic direction and key programmes

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<sup>5</sup> In addition to listed categories and legal forms of protection, not named as such but defined in the regulation, there are also historical and cultural reserves, historical and cultural protected areas, protection zones, protected archaeological areas, historical areas of settlement.

for the protection, conservation and integration of the property into public life in accordance with the World Heritage Convention. It must guide all management activities related to the property and includes:

- Identification and designation details of the World Heritage property;
- A map and topographical data;
- Definition and description of the buffer zone;
- A summary of the OUV of the property;
- Aims, strategies and objectives for the conservation, maintenance and presentation of the OUV;
- Management methods for the property;
- Conditions, restrictions and prohibitions applicable within the property and its buffer zone.

The Management Plan is to be reviewed at least every five years, or sooner if required by recommendations of the UNESCO World Heritage Committee or special circumstances.

The procedure for the designation of the Management Body and the Supervisory Board of a World Heritage property is defined by **Resolution No. 805 of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine (2019)**. The Resolution stipulates that for each World Heritage property a single management body must be established or designated. This authority must meet the following criteria:

- Demonstrated ability to professionally, competently and effectively fulfil the responsibilities set out in the Law of Ukraine on the Protection of Cultural Heritage and to ensure an effective management system and decision-making framework for the World Heritage property;
- Availability of qualified staff employed on a permanent basis;
- Ability to assess the impact of urban development and conduct other scientific research related to the OUV of the World Heritage property;
- Ability to provide expert assessments of scientific and design documentation related to conservation, restoration, rehabilitation, museumification, repair and adaptation works within the World Heritage property, its territory and buffer zone, specifically evaluating the potential impact on the OUV of the property;
- Ability to evaluate scientific and design documentation related to urban planning, architectural and landscape alterations, land reclamation, road construction and earthworks in the property and its buffer zone with regard to their potential impact on the OUV.

The Management Body must be a legal entity representing one or more stakeholders of the World Heritage property, with the capacity to oversee activities within the buffer zone. The selection and designation will be made by the MCSC on the basis of a public presentation and evaluation of the proposed management programmes. The evaluation process is guided by the principles of efficiency, fairness and transparency.

If the applicant is affiliated with a public authority, the formal approval of that authority is required. Until a dedicated management entity is officially designated, the MCSC assumes direct responsibility for the management of the World Heritage property.

According to the same resolution the management programme should include:

- A general understanding of the OUV of the World Heritage property and its buffer zone;
- A detailed description of the management system for the World Heritage property and its buffer zone;
- Procedures for stakeholder involvement in planning, consultation and management processes;

- A planning and implementation cycle for conservation and monitoring activities within the property and its buffer zone;
- An assessment of the vulnerability of the property and its buffer zone to social, economic and other pressures;
- Identification of the resources required for protection and conservation, including estimated costs and potential sources of funding;
- A forward-looking assessment of the economic potential and sustainable development prospects of the World Heritage property.

The Board, responsible for overseeing the functioning of the Management Body, should be composed of six independent experts nominated by relevant professional organisations. The members of the Board will be selected by the so-called UNESCO Council (established by a recent legislative amendment but not yet appointed) and formally approved by the MCSC.

The same Resolution sets out the procedures for the protection, conservation, and management of World Heritage properties in Ukraine. It mandates the establishment or designation of a dedicated management body for each 'World Heritage object'. This body must meet specific criteria, including professional competence, effective governance, the capacity to cooperate with international organisations, and the ability to assess the impact of development on the OUV of the site. The MCSC selects the management body through a transparent and competitive process, based on the public presentation and evaluation of the submitted management programmes.

The Resolution also establishes the procedure for forming a Supervisory Board for each World Heritage property. The Board is composed of independent experts and professionals, selected through a competitive process coordinated by the MCSC. The Board members elect a Chairperson. Additionally, the Resolution provides a model regulation outlining the mandate, tasks, functions, and rights of the Board.

The primary objectives of the Supervisory Board are to ensure transparency, impartiality and independence in its oversight. Its responsibilities include conducting independent evaluations of the management body's performance, monitoring the implementation of the management plan, and making recommendations to resolve conflicts between conservation and development pressures.

### 3. **Law on the Regulation of Urban Development** (Bulletin of the Supreme Council of Ukraine, 2011, No. 34, p. 343, with amendments as of 2025)

While the law does not explicitly refer to World Heritage properties, it does establish obligations relevant to heritage protection through urban planning mechanisms. Specifically, it mandates the development of territorial zoning plans, which must include provisions for the protection of cultural heritage.

In areas listed in the Register of Historically Inhabited Areas (Settlements) of Ukraine, zoning plans must define development regulation regimes and include a historical and architectural reference plan detailing the presence and characteristics of cultural heritage assets.

Design documentation for construction projects must be prepared with the participation of a certified architect and in compliance with urban planning conditions and land use restrictions. However, such documentation is not subject to approval by local government bodies or authorities responsible for cultural heritage or environmental protection.

To strengthen oversight, the Unified State Electronic System for the Construction Sector was introduced in 2019. This digital register tracks all permits and authorisations for preparatory and construction work, the acceptance of completed projects, and decisions on amendments, refusals or revocations. The system aims to increase transparency and control over development activities.

4. **Law on Environmental Impact Assessment** (Official Bulletin of the Supreme Council of Ukraine, 2017, No. 29, art. 315, with amendments as of 2024)

The Law on Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) regulates development activities through mandatory assessment procedures aimed at identifying potential impacts on the environment, including cultural heritage. The law outlines a list of project types for which an EIA is required, based on their potential for significant environmental impacts.

While cultural heritage is nominally included in the scope of the assessment, the law does not provide specific procedures for conducting Heritage Impact Assessments (HIAs). Nor does it explicitly address the impact of new construction in urban areas, except in the context of transport infrastructure projects. As such, the application of EIA to heritage contexts remains general and lacks tailored provisions for the protection of World Heritage properties or historically sensitive urban environments.

5. **Other regulations and standards**

A number of national norms and standards have been issued by the Ministry of Regional Development, Construction, Housing and Communal Services of Ukraine and the Ministry of Communities and Territorial Development of Ukraine to guide work on historic monuments. These include:

- Guidelines for carrying out repair and restoration works on architectural and urban monuments (ДСТУ-Н Б В.3.2-4:2016, 2016);
- Composition and content of scientific and project documentation for restoration of architectural and urban monuments (ДБН А.2.2-14:2016, 2016, with subsequent amendments).

In response to wartime conditions, a **Special procedure for carrying out certain types of work on cultural heritage objects under martial law** was adopted by Cabinet of Ministers Resolution No. 1342 (2022). This regulation applies to emergency, urgent conservation and repair work on cultural heritage objects damaged during the full-scale invasion by the Russian Federation. It remains in force during the period of martial law and for one year after its termination. Emergency and urgent conservation measures are intended to stabilise and secure protected elements of heritage structures, including through temporary coverings and structural reinforcements. Ongoing and major repairs, which may include reconstruction, are permitted for non-protected elements, subject to a site clearance review.

A special commission should be established to assess the condition of the site. This commission consists of qualified experts in architecture, urban planning and civil engineering, and may include other specialists as required. The commission conducts a visual inspection and issues a 'defective act' detailing recommended interventions. Once approved by the MCSC or the relevant regional heritage authority, the act forms the basis for further work and determines whether technical (scientific and design) documentation is required. Following the 2022 Regulation, the Odesa City Council set up a commission consisting of reconstruction and restoration specialists and members of the city council.

A decision to approve or reject an application for repair, emergency or urgent conservation work on a cultural heritage monument must be issued by the relevant authority within three working days of receipt of the application and supporting documentation.

It should also be noted that if a monument listed in the SRIM is identified as a symbol of the communist totalitarian regime, as defined in the **Law on Condemnation of the Communist and National Socialist (Nazi) Totalitarian Regimes in Ukraine and Prohibition of Propaganda of Their Symbols** (2015), or as a symbol of Russian imperial policy, as defined in the **Law on Condemnation and Prohibition of Propaganda of Russian Imperial Policy in Ukraine and Decolonisation of Place Names** (2024), it is subject to removal from the SRIM. A special procedure has been established for this process, with the possibility of exceptions for heritage objects of special significance, including World Heritage properties.



### III. THE MISSION

The World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring Mission to the Historic Centre of Odesa took place over four full days, from Tuesday 11 to Friday 14 February 2025. The programme included a series of meetings with national, regional, and municipal authorities, working sessions with technical departments, and on-site inspections of cultural heritage sites within the boundaries of the World Heritage property and its buffer zone. The mission aimed to assess the current state of conservation of the property and to provide support in strengthening the management framework in light of ongoing war-related challenges. The mission began with a high-level meeting with the Mayor of Odesa and senior representatives of the City Council. The meeting was also attended by representatives of the MCSC of Ukraine. Following the meeting, the Mayor accompanied the mission team on a short walking tour along Prymorskyi Boulevard, including the Odesa City Council, Pushkin Monument, and Potemkin Stairs. The team also visited the building at 6 Prymorskyi Boulevard, identified as the future location for the Odesa Heritage Management Centre. The team also undertook a short vehicular tour of the city, passing key heritage sites and briefly stopping at the Mendeleevych Passage at 34 Preobrazhenska Street, where crack gauge monitors previously installed by UNESCO remain in place.

In the afternoon, the mission met with the Department of Architecture and Construction to review urban planning challenges related to Odesa's World Heritage designation. Later in the afternoon, the mission visited the House of Scientists at 4 Sabaneev Most Street, damaged during a missile strike in 2023. Representatives of the institution provided a tour of the building, expressed appreciation for past UNESCO assistance, and stressed the urgent need to repair its retaining walls. This site is among several benefiting from international support for emergency stabilisation measures.

On Wednesday, 12 February 2025, the day began with a working session with the Odesa Regional Administration, led by Governor Oleh Kiper. The Administration clarified its role in enforcing building regulations and its responsibilities under Ukraine's Law on the Protection of Cultural Heritage. The Governor underlined the significance of the mission and the value of UNESCO and ICOMOS gaining first-hand knowledge of wartime conditions.

The mission team continued its programme with a series of visits to cultural institutions located within the boundaries of the inscribed property. The first stop was the Odesa National Art Museum, where the team observed visible damage caused by the ongoing war and was informed about the museum's continued efforts to host temporary exhibitions despite the challenging conditions. As the team proceeded towards the next destination, they passed through Oleksandra Rymburda Lane, where a number of buildings of historical and cultural significance were noted to be in a visibly deteriorated condition, offering insight into the broader conservation issues affecting the area. A brief inspection was then conducted at the Odesa National Scientific Library before the team visited the Odesa National Academic Theatre of Opera and Ballet. Here, the team was given a tour of the basement area, which has been adapted to serve both as an air raid shelter during performances and as a venue for small-scale cultural events, thereby enabling the continuation of artistic activities during periods of heightened risk.

Further short visits were made to the Museum of Western and Eastern Art, the Odesa Archaeological Museum, and the Odesa Literary Museum, where the team had the opportunity to assess general conditions and engage briefly with institutional staff. The final visit of the day was to the Odesa Regional Philharmonic, a monument of cultural significance provisionally inscribed on the International List of Cultural Property under Enhanced Protection. The building sustained damage during a missile strike on 31 January 2025. During this visit, representatives from the NGO Museum for Change provided a detailed account of the emergency stabilisation measures undertaken immediately following the incident.



On the morning of Thursday, 13 February 2025, the mission team held a working session with the Odesa Port Authority to address the complex relationship between heritage protection and port operations. Representatives from the Stevedore Association expressed concern that the port had been included in the nominated property's buffer zone without prior consultation. Later that day, a second working session was held in the City Council to discuss the consequences of missile and drone attacks on cultural heritage and the evolving conditions under which restoration must now occur. Participants included representatives from City Maintenance Services, emergency response teams, and the Odesa branch of the National Research and Restoration Centre. The latter part of the session focused on the practical challenges of restoration under wartime conditions. It was reported that, prior to the outbreak of the war, the City Council was able to support between seven and ten restoration projects each year. Later that afternoon, from 16:00 to 16:30, the mission team visited the Transfiguration Cathedral, which is benefiting from a UNESCO-supported initiative financed by the Government of Italy. The visit was led by Father Myroslav Vdodovych, assistant to the Rector of the Cathedral. Following this, the mission team conducted a field visit to review the proposed buffer zone of the World Heritage property, from 16:30 to 18:00. The visit provided an opportunity to observe current conditions and discuss potential boundary adjustments in the context of operational, regulatory, and conservation needs.

On the morning of Friday, 14 February 2025, the mission team met with representatives of the NGO Museum for Change to learn more about its activities in protecting cultural heritage amid war-related threats. The meeting was intended to include representatives from the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation (AICS), though they ultimately did not attend. A subsequent working session brought together additional institutional and civil society partners, including the Odesa State Academy of Engineering and Architecture and the Odesa Branch of the National Union of Architects of Ukraine.

The final session convened representatives from the City Council, Regional Administration, and the mission team to review the regulatory framework governing cultural heritage protection, with particular focus on procedures and challenges in responding to war-related damage.

#### **IV. ASSESSMENT OF THE STATE OF CONSERVATION OF THE PROPERTY**

##### **ISSUE 1: Overall State of Conservation and Progress Made in Conservation Programmes**

*Terms of reference 1 and 2d.*

The assessment of the state of conservation of a World Heritage property is undertaken in relation to the attributes that convey its OUV. The purpose of this assessment is to determine whether factors affecting these attributes compromise the property's integrity and authenticity. It also evaluates the effectiveness of protection and management measures in safeguarding the property's OUV.

It is important to recall that, due to the emergency procedure applied during the nomination process, a standard technical evaluation mission could not be conducted prior to the property's inscription. Furthermore, the boundaries of the property were significantly expanded at the request of the World Heritage Committee<sup>6</sup>, compared to those proposed in the original nomination dossier submitted by the State Party. These factors form an essential part of the context within which the Reactive Monitoring mission has been carried out.

The Historic Centre of Odesa was simultaneously inscribed on the World Heritage List and on the List of World Heritage in Danger, owing to the ongoing war in Ukraine. Given the exceptional circumstances in which the nomination was prepared and reviewed, the attributes of the Historic Centre of Odesa – understood as the elements, processes, or features that illustrate and express its OUV – were neither fully identified by the State Party nor assessed by the Advisory Body during the inscription process.

Moreover, due to the significant extension of the property's boundaries at the Committee's request<sup>7</sup>, compared to those defined in the original nomination dossier submitted by the State Party, the nomination dossier is insufficient as a source of information on the attributes underlying the property's OUV and their current condition. No additional documentation was provided by the State Party, leaving the mission to rely primarily on the information contained in the 2007 Historical and Architectural Reference (Protection) Plan.

The process of defining and elaborating the attributes of the property is ongoing. It is being supported by the UNESCO/ICOMOS Technical Assistance Programme, which focuses on revising the draft Management Plan for the World Heritage property *Historic Centre of Odesa* and on establishing the DSOCR. This work is made possible through the support of the UNESCO/Japan Funds-in-Trust and the World Heritage Fund.

At this stage, the assessment of the property's integrity and authenticity remains incomplete and must rely largely on a general evaluation of the condition of the built heritage. At a later stage – once the attributes have been clearly identified, and the DSOCR and the corresponding programme of corrective measures have been further developed – a UNESCO/ICOMOS technical mission may be organised, subject to funding availability, to carry out a more detailed assessment of the property's state of conservation.

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<sup>6</sup> Decision **18 EXT.COM 5.2**.



*Photo 2. Preobrazhenska Street – example of the diversity of architectural styles and maintenance issues. © K. Piotrowska*

In accordance with the provisions of the 1954 Hague Convention (Article 23) and its Second Protocol (Article 33), a UNESCO International Expert Mission was organised in 2023 to assess the damage to cultural and religious sites in Odesa. The mission conducted two visits to the city: the first from 29 July to 1 August 2023 to assess the most severely damaged sites, and the second from 28 August to 10 September 2023 for in-depth evaluations of moderately and mildly damaged properties. The mission's report emphasised **the need to enhance emergency interventions and improve first-aid and risk prevention measures to reduce vulnerability in the event of further attacks.**

Between 2022 and May 2025, UNESCO has verified that a total of 57 cultural properties within the World Heritage boundaries have been damaged or destroyed. Some buildings have suffered repeated damage. A large-scale attack prior to the mission occurred on 31 January 2025.





Figure 1. Map produced by the World Heritage Centre for this mission, illustrating cultural properties confirmed by UNESCO as damaged due to the war.

The Historic Centre of Odesa, inscribed on the World Heritage List, covers an area of 618.54 hectares within the inner core of a historically layered and actively inhabited urban environment. As a living city, Odesa continues to evolve, and the pressures of contemporary urban development have visibly impacted the condition of its historic fabric. The ongoing war and repeated military strikes on the World Heritage property have further contributed to the deterioration of its already fragile state of conservation. Evidence of this can be observed in the façades and courtyards of numerous historic buildings. Although the poor condition of many buildings appears to predate the war, the current situation – marked by limited funding, a shortage of skilled personnel, and the potential vacancy of some buildings – has likely accelerated the deterioration.



*Photo 3. Modern Athena shopping centre at Hretska (Greek) Square—the oldest square in the city—occupying the site of the former Mayurov House, demolished in 1996, with some elements remaining. Its contemporary design contrasts sharply with the historic urban surroundings. © K. Piotrowska*

Despite the generally positive perception of Odesa's historic centre, years of neglect and a lack of oversight concerning repair, conservation, and adaptation works on individual buildings were clearly evident during the visual inspections. The variation in building condition becomes increasingly evident further inland from the sea: while representative and public buildings are generally well maintained, their current appearance often reflects the cumulative effects of past restorations and modernisations, rather than comprehensive conservation carried out in line with international standards.

The mission observed that repair works, security measures, and restorations carried out in response to military strikes often involve structural reinforcement or the replacement of historic materials with fire-resistant alternatives. When such interventions are undertaken without appropriate methodologies, conservation techniques, or compatible materials, they risk compromising the integrity and authenticity of individual historic buildings. Depending on their location and scale, these interventions may also have a wider impact on the integrity and authenticity of the World Heritage property as a whole. Therefore, any interventions affecting the historic fabric and structures should be fully justified and based on a thorough assessment of their potential impact on the property's OUV. To support the identification of attributes conveying OUV and to assess their current state of conservation, a comprehensive architectural and historical analysis may be necessary – particularly for monuments of national and local significance. Such analyses would help clarify the extent of original material versus more recent interventions and would provide a foundation for improving conservation standards and informing relevant legal and regulatory frameworks.

Courtyards, a defining typological element of Odesa's urban morphology, show considerable variation in use, state of repair and architectural coherence. These spaces remain under-researched and under-protected, yet are crucial for understanding the full spatial and social structure of the city. Additionally, façade articulations, structural elements, and decorative features – such as proportions, stucco or artificial stone, entrances, windows, balconies, and



roofs – should be carefully assessed and respected in any conservation effort, to ensure the preservation of the building’s historic character and architectural integrity. Street trees play a vital role in shaping Odesa’s urban character, with their strategic placement significantly contributing to the city’s aesthetic and environmental identity. A comprehensive tree survey covering aspects such as condition, species and historical context is necessary to develop an effective tree management programme. Similarly, elements such as surviving historic street surfaces, street furniture, infrastructure components and the diverse range of wall constructions and façades – often obscured by unauthorised installations, such as air conditioning units – along with balconies, require a coordinated, data-driven conservation strategy. This programme should be incorporated into the broader urban conservation strategy, particularly given the need for climate change mitigation measures.



*Photo 4. A typical street in Odesa, where building façades are characterised by balconies – highlighting common maintenance and conservation challenges. © K. Piotrowska*

Historically, due to a shortage of timber, Odesa relied on locally sourced coquina, a type of limestone known locally as *rakusznik*, as its primary building material. This practice has led to the creation of extensive subterranean quarries which, while contributing to the historic fabric of the city, now may pose a threat to the structural integrity of historic buildings. Additionally, weathering and changing climatic conditions are impacting the strength and durability of this stone, as well as other construction materials such as iron, contributing to the gradual deterioration of historic structures. These factors, alongside traditional construction methods, necessitate an in-depth inventory and research, followed by the development of targeted conservation guidelines.





*Photo 5. Shored-up building on Liapunova Lane © UNESCO*



*Photo 6. Structural vertical addition between Liapunova Lane and Olhiviska Street © UNESCO*



Odesa's extensive network of underground limestone quarries (often referred to as the 'catacombs') beneath the historic centre is not formally recognised as a heritage asset, except for small sections designated as a monument, as the one in the Moldovanka district. Although not explicitly referenced in the SOUV, these subterranean spaces may possess significant heritage value while simultaneously presenting structural risks. As such, they should be taken into account when identifying the property's attributes, defining the buffer zone, and developing the regulatory frameworks governing the property and its setting.

Ownership structures, including a high proportion of privately owned properties, pose a further challenge to the enforcement of conservation measures. In this context, the effectiveness of current legal instruments and institutional mechanisms for heritage protection needs to be thoroughly assessed.

The urban topography of the historic centre of Odesa is largely flat, which contributes to the prominence and visibility of the built environment. The documentation submitted by the State Party following the Reactive Monitoring mission includes a study of the Integrated Protection Zone, which provides a preliminary inventory of buildings and the number of storeys. Although the study remains incomplete, it provides useful insights into the vertical profile of the city. The predominant historic building stock consists of structures between one and six storeys, with considerable variation in typology and internal height. This low-rise urban fabric forms the visual and structural core of Odesa's historic townscape. The quality of natural light at street level is a distinctive feature due to the relatively low building heights, flat topography and wide street dimensions. The expansive sky views from within the streets are another distinctive feature. This openness, combined with the city's coastal location, ensures the sea remains a prominent feature throughout the historic urban landscape. A thorough study of the main compositional elements and key views is essential to inform the city's future urban development, including policies to preserve main vistas and compositional axes.





Recent development trends, however, show a marked departure from the traditional scale and character. Individual high-rise buildings, some up to 17 storeys, have been inserted into the historic fabric, often with little regard for established architectural rhythm and proportion. These new structures, typically built in the last two decades, are already having a visible impact on the historic skyline and urban coherence, with the potential to further compromise the OUV of the World Heritage property if left unchecked.



*Photo 7. View of the Odesa Hotel, destroyed by bombings in 2023, from European Square. © K. Piotrowska*

A list of over 100 buildings considered visually incongruous within the Integrated Protection Zone has been compiled as part of the 2021 General Plan revision. This list highlights the urgent need for clear urban height regulations, supported by effective heritage impact assessments and urban design controls. Such measures are essential to prevent the further erosion of the historic urban landscape and the decline of the property's integrity.



*Photo 8. The Potemkin Stairs and the new mall, with the Odesa Hotel positioned at the end of the key vista.  
© K. Piotrowska*



*Photo 9. Hretska (Greek) Street – one of the city's main compositional axes, now visually blocked by an infill building at Hretska Square. © K. Piotrowska*

The interiors of historic buildings may be directly linked to the property's OUV, as they contribute significantly to the city's historic character as part of Odessa's architectural development. With the exception of public buildings, these interiors were not examined during the Reactive Monitoring mission. Nonetheless, evidence of substantial interior alterations has been noted, with façades often retained while interior spaces are either partially or entirely



modified. Although façade retention alone may be justified in specific cases, such interventions risk diluting the historical character and degrading the historic urban landscape, ultimately leading to a loss of authenticity and integrity. It is therefore essential that a clear policy be developed and implemented in Odesa to regulate and prevent façadism.

Currently, legal protection extends to 1,354 monuments that are listed individually. However, local expert assessments suggest that around 5,000 more buildings meet the criteria for inclusion in the State Register of Immovable Monuments. Alongside the urgent need to inventory heritage assets – an issue noted by the mission and echoed by representatives of universities and professional organisations – this discrepancy underscores the necessity of a systematic review and revision of the existing register to ensure comprehensive legal protection.

The applicable law protects the ‘traditional character’ of historic settlements and monument protection zones. However, this has resulted in new developments adopting a form of historicism with exaggerated proportions that do not align with the authenticity of the historic centre. Therefore, the concept of ‘preserving traditional character’ as applied in the past must be revisited to ensure its implementation does not contradict the objective of maintaining the authenticity of the World Heritage property.

Due to prevailing circumstances, the mission team was only able to conduct a partial on-site inspection of the Historic Centre of Odesa. Nevertheless, based on direct observations and the available supporting documentation, the mission considers that the property continues to convey the character and atmosphere of a vibrant and dynamic urban centre. Although the condition of the built fabric varies, the overall state appears relatively stable. However, there are notable disparities in the state of conservation across individual buildings and areas within the property, with certain zones showing signs of neglect, deterioration, or pressure from incompatible development.

### ***Progress made in conservation programmes***

The Odesa City Council has consistently reaffirmed its commitment to the preservation of the city’s cultural heritage. In the run-up to the inscription of the Historic Centre of Odesa on the World Heritage List, a series of conservation activities were carried out between 2006 and 2021. These included both planning and implementation phases, with works covering documentation, repair, restoration and maintenance. These efforts were partially outlined in the Draft Management Plan submitted with the nomination dossier and further detailed in the context of the mission.

Within the framework of the City Targeted Programme for the Preservation of Cultural Heritage Sites, repair and restoration works on façades and roofs were planned for 212 historic buildings during the period 2019-2021. Of these, work has been completed on approximately 30 sites, while scientific and design documentation has been prepared for a further 67 sites. At the time of the mission, work had not started on the remaining 115 sites. The programme also included infrastructure improvements, such as major repairs to roads and pavements in the historic area.



*Photo 10. Example of Odesa's characteristic cobblestone streets. © K. Piotrowska*

However, implementation was significantly hampered by the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020-2021, which led to delays in planned activities. As a continuation, a new programme for 2022-2024 was approved by the Executive Committee of the Odesa City Council on 5 April 2022 (Decision No. 43). Unfortunately, due to the full-scale invasion by the Russian Federation, this programme has been only partially implemented.



*Photo 11. Recently restored exterior of a historic building at the corner of Italiiska (Italian) and Yevreiska (Jewish) streets. © K. Piotrowska*

The mission found that, while conservation work on public buildings appears to have been carried out to acceptable standards, the overall quality of conservation work varies. This inconsistency seems to highlight the need for clearer technical guidelines and stronger professional oversight to ensure that conservation work is both effective and in line with international standards. Conservation documentation standards should also be upgraded to meet international level.

The availability of financial and human resources for heritage conservation remains a major concern. While some buildings have recently undergone conservation or emergency repairs, the wider shortage of adequately trained and licensed conservation professionals, compounded by limited education and training opportunities, poses a structural challenge to the sustainability of heritage conservation in Odesa.

Therefore, the mission recommends that the State Party invest in the establishment of documentation standards for interventions in historic buildings, along with a licensing system for professionals authorised to undertake conservation of monuments. This should be supported by opportunities for formal education in the field, as well as other forms of capacity-building.

Although the mission could not comprehensively address the issue of conservation funding mechanisms, it is clear that the lack of a stable financial framework significantly hampers ongoing and future conservation activities. The war has further strained already limited resources, but many of the systemic problems – such as inadequate funding strategies, lack of financial incentives and lack of skilled staff – predate the current war. Addressing these capacity gaps through national and international support remains critical to ensuring the long-term protection and management of the World Heritage property.

The **mission recommends** the continuation of existing conservation programmes and the development of a comprehensive, long-term conservation strategy, grounded in a thorough assessment of the current condition of the built fabric and informed by risk analysis, with clearly



defined priorities. This strategy should address both the urban scale and individual architectural elements, incorporating the use of traditional construction techniques and materials where appropriate. It should be supported by adequately resourced implementation programmes and underpinned by thematic conservation guidelines. The mission further recommends the development and implementation of a public awareness campaign targeted at owners and users of historic buildings, to promote understanding of the OUV of the property, the value of heritage and appropriate maintenance practices. Both the conservation strategy and the awareness campaign should be led by the Odesa City Council, with the support of the MCSC and other relevant national authorities.

### ***Refining the identification of attributes conveying the property's Outstanding Universal Value***

The process of identification of attributes is linked to the national heritage protection system in Ukraine, where the definition of the 'subject of protection' of a cultural monument is a legal prerequisite for its inclusion in the State Register of Immovable Monuments (SRIM) and the assignment of protective measures. Clarification of the attributes of the World Heritage property is therefore essential not only to fulfil Ukraine's international obligations, but also to ensure its effective protection under domestic law.

While five key themes or attributes have been proposed in the course of the 2023 Periodic Reporting, these require further reflection, validation and refinement to ensure that they accurately reflect the OUV of the property. Identified five key attributes considered to convey the property's OUV are:

- The sustainability and organic character of the urban structure, with clearly recognisable compositional axes.
- A high degree of homogeneity among buildings constructed within a relatively short period of time.
- Architectural diversity, reflecting a range of cultural influences and stylistic expressions.
- The multicultural character of the city and traditions of peaceful coexistence.
- The historic importance of the port in international trade.

**The mission recommends that priority be given to identifying the broader thematic frameworks that encompass the key attributes underpinning the World Heritage property's OUV, as a matter of urgency.** With the support of the MCSC, the Odesa Council should develop and adopt a comprehensive programme, ensuring that the necessary human and financial resources are allocated. International technical assistance may also be required. This initiative should be closely coordinated with the legal clarification of the property's scope of protection, as defined by national heritage legislation. A clear understanding of the logic and conceptual framework behind identifying attributes as elements that express and support OUV will provide a strong foundation for this process. The identification of these attributes must be supported by a series of studies and a thorough assessment of the property's condition.

Given the complexity of this task and the relatively recent introduction of attribute-based analysis in a World Heritage context, targeted capacity building initiatives may be required. These could assist professionals and institutions in the effective application of international standards and the integration of this approach into national and local heritage management systems.

## **ISSUE 2: Assessment of Legal Advancements in Regulating the Integrated Protection Zone and Integrating Heritage Impact Assessments**

*Terms of reference 2.a and 2.b*

### ***Legal regulations***

Ukrainian legislation ensures special status and protection for World Heritage properties, introduced by the 2018 amendment to the Law on the Protection of Cultural Heritage. However, the nomination dossier does not refer to this amendment or to the legal inclusion of Odesa in the List of Historical Settlements of Ukraine, thus omitting details of these protections.

An **Integrated Protection Zone** for Odesa is established as part of the General Plan (Master Plan) of the City of Odesa, approved by City Council Resolution No. 6489-VI of 25 March 2015. This plan was developed in accordance with the Law on Regulation of Urban Development and the specific requirements for historical settlements included in the List of Historical Settlements of Ukraine, as outlined in the Law on Protection of Cultural Heritage. The delineation of the boundaries and the definition of the zoning regimes were carried out with the necessary documentation, including the historical and architectural reference plan.

During the evaluation process, ICOMOS highlighted the need to reinforce the existing measures of the Integrated Protection Zone to ensure a more robust conservation framework. This includes establishing a clear policy that strongly discourages the demolition of monuments of national and local significance, permitting such actions only in exceptional and well-justified cases. Future conservation strategies should recognise the coherence of Odesa's historic streetscapes and urban blocks – distinctive features of the city's character – and treat them as integrated units that contribute to the property's OUV.

In the light of the information provided during the mission and additional clarifications provided by the State Party, it appears that under the current legislative framework, the site should have first be granted the highest legal protection status at the national level (as a monument of national importance) before being nominated for inscription on the World Heritage List. In the case of Odesa, 42 individual buildings are already designated as Monuments of National Importance and a further 1,312 buildings have the status of Monuments of Local Importance. However, the area proposed for inscription, which the Committee requested to extend, did not have this status at the time of nomination. This discrepancy has led to difficulties in interpreting the internal legislation on the protection of urban complexes inscribed on the World Heritage List.

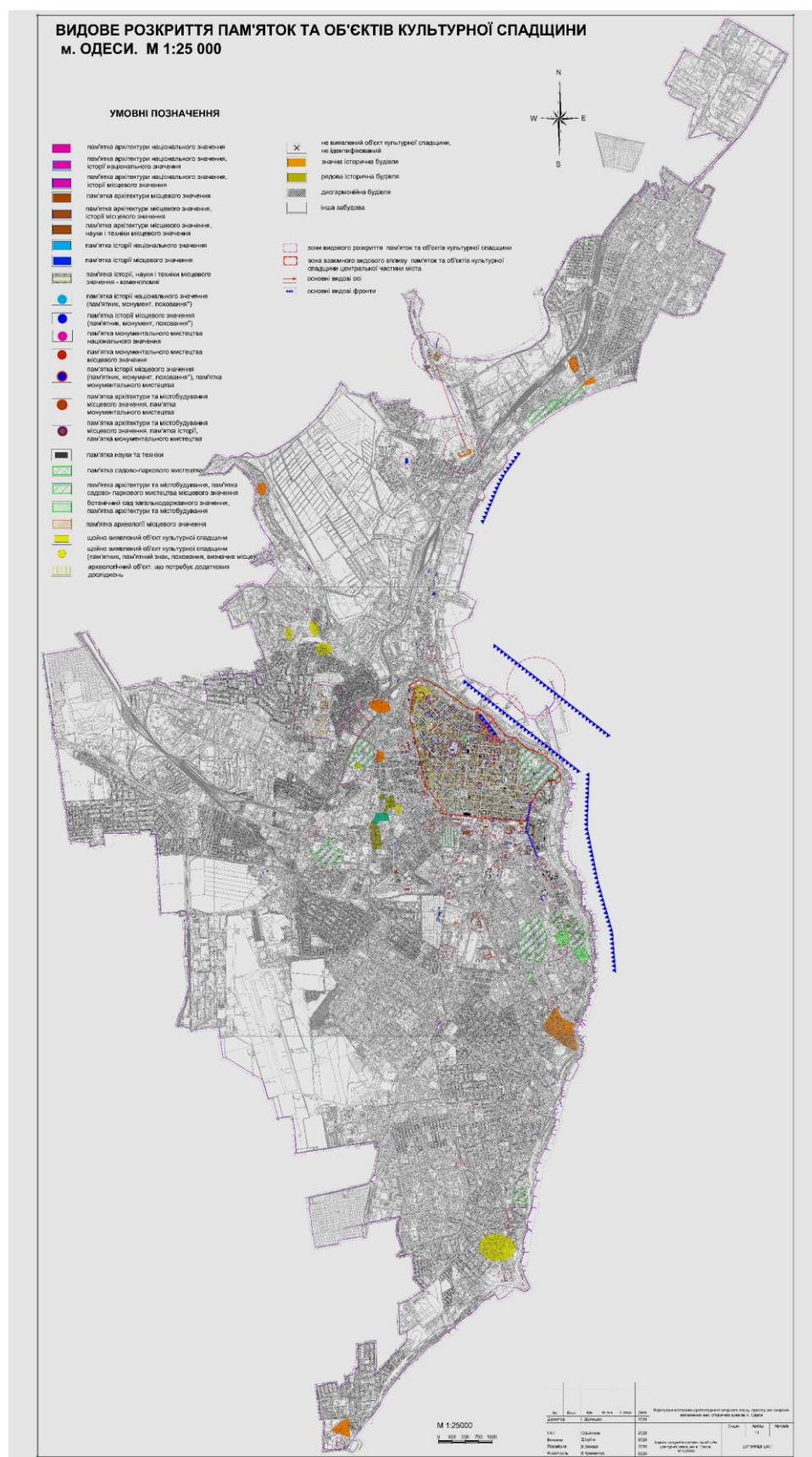


Figure 3. Typological classification of monuments and cultural heritage objects in the City of Odesa

For cultural monuments of local importance, the Department of Culture, Nationalities, Religions and Protection of Cultural Heritage Objects within the Odesa Regional Military Administration is responsible for ensuring protection in accordance with the law, in cooperation with the owner or manager of the monument, as set out in the 'Protection Agreement'.

For monuments of national importance, the Regional Administration must inform the MCSC of any discrepancies between the approved work and the work carried out. Within the Historic Centre of Odesa, some such discrepancies have been identified, and until a management body is appointed, all information gathered by the Regional Administration is being sent to the MCSC.

It is important to note that the procedure for registering properties requires the preparation of detailed technical documentation. However, due to the ongoing war and the current state of the recognition and inventory process, this procedure may not be sufficient to safeguard the OUV of the property effectively. It is also worth noting that, in 2022, in response to a request for additional information made during the evaluation process, the State Party indicated that a complete set of documents for granting special status as an architectural monument to the central zone of Odesa had been prepared and submitted to the then Ministry of Culture and Information Policy. However, the Mission did not have access to this documentation.

The Law on the Protection of Cultural Heritage requires the preparation of scientific and design (research) documentation to determine the use of the World Heritage property and its buffer zone. This documentation, to be prepared by the management authority and approved by the MCSC, will guide urban planning decisions. It will ensure that urban planning documentation is adapted to the World Heritage status and that the boundaries of the World Heritage property and its buffer zone are integrated into urban planning considerations.

The future development of the City of Odesa is outlined in the 2015 General Plan of the City, **which should also take into account the boundaries of the World Heritage property and integrate them into the cadastral documentation.** At present, these boundaries are not reflected in the records, which poses a risk to the protection of the site. The inclusion of these boundaries in the cadastral documentation is essential to ensure protection from future inappropriate development.

In accordance with the Law on the Protection of Cultural Heritage, land with cultural and historical significance is classified as a special category, subject to lower taxation rates and stricter construction regulations. Odesa was originally designated as a residential or administrative area. However, following its inscription as a World Heritage property, it shall now be considered a monument of cultural and historical importance, regardless of the current use of individual buildings or areas. This reclassification requires the entire property to undergo a national registration process as a single monument. The shift from residential or administrative zoning to a 'monumental' designation may create tensions with existing approaches to managing living historic centres and may not provide the most effective means of safeguarding the property's OUV while balancing heritage protection with urban development needs. A more appropriate solution would be to base the protection of the property on clearly identified attributes, which would then be defined as the 'subject of protection' under national law. This should be accompanied by the concurrent strengthening of heritage protection mechanisms for the wider historic settlement through the land use planning system.

A decision by the Cabinet of Ministers is required for a cultural property to be granted protected status. This decision is based on an identification card (called a 'passport') that must first be signed by the municipal council and then approved by the regional administration. A clear definition of what constitutes a 'cultural object' with World Heritage status and subject to protection is essential. In particular, it is crucial to determine whether the protection applies to individual cultural properties and/or to the wider urban landscape and its elements. The protection of 'cultural objects', 'historic settlements' and 'World Heritage properties' under the

Law on the Protection of Cultural Heritage needs further clarification and appropriate linkage. **Special legal instruments may be required for 'historic settlements' with World Heritage status in Ukraine, which should be included in both heritage protection laws and urban development regulations and related legal acts.**

In practice, the MCSC serves as the primary body responsible for regulating any development, construction, or restoration activity within the World Heritage property and its buffer zone, until a dedicated World Heritage management body is established and the relevant documentation is developed. National regulations, as set out in Resolution No. 805 of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine (2019), also require that such interventions be reviewed by the so-called 'Ukrainian National Council for UNESCO World Heritage Affairs', the establishment of which is foreseen under the same resolution, and that the World Heritage Committee be duly notified prior to any action being taken. The mission wishes to emphasise that the name, acronym, and logo of UNESCO constitute the intellectual property of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, and may not be used by any individual or organisation without prior written authorisation from UNESCO. Accordingly, it is recommended that, in establishing it, the name of this council be changed, and that appropriate consideration be given to the use of the UNESCO name in the designation of any future entity or office.

The current World Heritage regulations are centralised, which has certain advantages. However, the management of a historic urban complex requires a clear and flexible legal framework, efficient procedures and decision-making processes. **The existing system focuses primarily on the protection of individual listed buildings, but effective protection of the urban heritage, including individual buildings, relies largely on spatial planning mechanisms and tools.** These tools are essential for the efficient and flexible management of space, allowing the preservation of the character of the place. **The system needs to accommodate the unique character of the place while ensuring the preservation of its OUV**, including the negotiation of parameters for new developments and interventions, and the protection of characteristic features within the urban landscape.

The legal framework for the World Heritage system has not yet been fully established, which appears to be impeding conservation-aimed action at city level. Addressing these legal issues should be a priority, along with strengthening the planning system to effectively manage new development. Introducing special or transitional regulations, coupled with an appropriate agreement between the central government and city authorities, may serve as an interim solution until statutory regulations are revised. While the mission acknowledges that the attributes underpinning the OUV must be clearly defined before effective protection measures can be implemented, **it emphasises that inventory, documentation, and the requisite analytical work should progress without delay.** The Odesa City Council should take the lead in these efforts, with substantial support from the MCSC and the Regional Administration.

Despite a complex and detailed body of laws and regulations, current national legislation in Ukraine does not yet provide a sufficiently clear or comprehensive framework specifically tailored to the protection and management of World Heritage properties. While such properties are legally recognised, they are currently governed by general provisions applicable to immovable cultural heritage and historic settlements, without specific legal instruments addressing their specific needs and obligations under the World Heritage Convention.

The legislation lacks detailed procedures for the development, approval and periodic monitoring of management plans, including the conduct of HIAs for proposed interventions. This regulatory gap leads to legal ambiguities, inconsistencies between different laws, and challenges in operationalising effective heritage protection, especially in complex urban environments. The lack of updated and accessible inventories of heritage properties further hampers informed decision-making and proactive conservation efforts. These structural weaknesses are compounded by the ongoing war and related geopolitical pressures, which have exacerbated risks to cultural heritage and hampered the ability of responsible institutions to respond effectively. Limited engagement by key stakeholders, due in part to legal uncertainty

and insufficient awareness of heritage values, contributes to a worrying stagnation in the sector.

In recognition of these challenges, the MCSC has acknowledged the need for reform and transparency. In response to a request for further information following the Mission, the State Party submitted the report *2024 Key Policy Issues: Immovable Cultural Heritage*, prepared as part of the RES-POL<sup>8</sup> project and supported by the European Union. This independent analysis, conducted by the Centre for Regional and PPV Economic Development Area, highlights several critical issues affecting the cultural heritage sector:

- A limited societal understanding of immovable heritage, rooted in historical contexts and gaps in public education, leading to low engagement and undervaluation of heritage professionals.
- Structural inefficiencies in the protection system, including weak monitoring, inconsistent documentation standards and ineffective enforcement mechanisms.
- A lack of stable funding and underdeveloped financial instruments, hampering both routine maintenance and long-term development of heritage assets.
- A significant shortage of skilled professionals, exacerbated by outdated training models and inadequate educational opportunities in heritage-related disciplines.
- Limited preparedness of heritage institutions to respond to emergencies, including the ongoing war, resulting in avoidable losses of cultural property.

The general observations made during the mission are in line with the challenges identified in the RES-POL analysis report: *Key Policy Issues: Immovable Cultural Heritage*. It is important to note that the regulations related to the World Heritage Convention and its integration into the Ukrainian legal framework are mentioned in the study, but only superficially. However, the report's insights into the heritage protection system, in particular with regard to the division of responsibilities, certification and authorisation of work on historic buildings and spatial planning, are highly relevant for the protection and management of the Historic Centre of Odesa and other Ukrainian World Heritage properties.

**The mission recommends that the State Party undertake a thorough analysis of the existing laws regulating the protection of World Heritage properties in Ukraine in order to identify significant deficiencies in the legal system. Any potential major revision of the law should include consultation with the World Heritage Committee.**

The results of the *Key Policy Issues: Immovable Cultural Heritage Analysis* should inform the design of new heritage protection legislation and the improvement of protection measures for World Heritage properties. *The World Heritage Resource Manual: Enhancing Our Heritage Toolkit 2.0 (EoH 2.0)*<sup>9</sup> can be a useful resource in the review process.

Unresolved tensions between urban development and heritage conservation, a lack of differentiated regulatory approaches for different heritage typologies, and outdated legal instruments pose additional threats to the sustainable management of cultural heritage. The cumulative impact of these issues is directly reflected in the management and protection of Ukraine's World Heritage properties, and the Historic Centre of Odesa is no exception. Addressing these challenges will require sustained institutional reform, improved coordination across administrative levels, investment in capacity building and a renewed commitment to integrating heritage conservation into national development and recovery strategies.

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<sup>8</sup> Rapid Expert Support for Culture and Media Policies in Ukraine – RES-POL - is a non-governmental organisation over a project founded by the European Union, which focuses on four sectors: cultural heritage, arts and culture, creative industries, media. It ends in 2025.

<sup>9</sup> Available at <https://whc.unesco.org/en/eoh20/>.

### ***Institutional Arrangements and Management Planning***

The draft management plan submitted with the nomination dossier outlined the intention to establish a dedicated management body known, as the 'UNESCO State Enterprise Odesa Centre'. This body should be supported by the MCSC, the Regional Administration and the Odesa City Council, responsible for developing, in cooperation with international experts, a monitoring system tailored to the current state of conservation and the impact of recent war-related damage. However, the draft plan is mainly a compilation of existing community programmes and a broad outline of the proposed governance structure, without presenting concrete strategies or clearly defined implementation frameworks. Furthermore, the official status and legal standing of the document remained unclear.

However, as required by the Law on the Protection of Cultural Heritage, the management body has not yet been established. Under the current legal framework in Ukraine, this is a significant formal and organisational problem, leading to a deadlock in decision-making. The law stipulates that until a manager for the World Heritage property is appointed, this responsibility falls to the MCSC, which is proving ineffective in the case of a historic city centre.

The lack of a clear regulatory and legal framework in Odesa hinders effective coordination between the City Council, the Regional Administration and the MCSC. This lack of defined roles complicates heritage protection efforts and obstructs the integration of conservation activities into urban development plans, thus affecting the effective management of the World Heritage property.

This situation requires clarification and may require legislative changes, depending on the analysis and decision on how best to manage World Heritage properties that are inhabited urban complexes. Drawing on the practices of other World Heritage cities, where issues related to the implementation of the World Heritage Convention are structured and effectively organised, may provide valuable lessons.

Despite its size and importance, there is currently no dedicated management arrangement for the property. Instead, oversight is embedded within the general city administration, which involves a complex interplay of government functions, public service delivery, community engagement and urban development planning – all aimed at improving the quality of life for residents.

Current national regulations stipulate that the selection of a World Heritage site manager is to be made through a competitive process, on the assumption that the body selected will have authority over the designated area. However, in the case of a World Heritage property located within a city centre, excluding it from the municipal organisational and administrative framework could be a risky approach, potentially transforming the city centre into a 'historical/archaeological reserve' and encouraging conflicting interests views between the management of the World Heritage property, and the city authorities and residents of the historic city. The Mission therefore recommends that the State Party conduct a thorough analysis of existing regulations and clarify the governance structure and responsibilities related to the implementation of the World Heritage Convention, particularly regarding the management of historic city centres. **If necessary, amendments should be made to current regulations to facilitate the designation of a dedicated management body for the World Heritage property 'The Historic Centre of Odesa'.**

Furthermore, the mission has noted the Port Authorities' expressed opposition to the inclusion of the port area within the proposed buffer zone. Their concern, as expressed during the mission, is that such inclusion could limit port operations and development under current national World Heritage-related legal provisions, potentially undermining the port's strategic functions. This underscores the necessity for the involvement of key stakeholders and the cultivation of enhanced collaboration in the management process. This collaborative approach should begin immediately to prevent the entrenchment of incorrect assumptions or interpretations.





*Photo 12. Construction site opposite to Port of Odesa, beneath Prymorskyi Boulevard, within the World Heritage*  
© K. Piotrowska

The management of the Historic Centre of Odesa must be rooted in existing national and local administrative structures and principles of urban governance. The inscribed area covers 618.54 hectares in the heart of a vibrant, living city, with an additional 618.8 hectares designated as its buffer zone.

Key areas of city administration relevant to World Heritage management include heritage protection, urban planning and development, community and public services, emergency preparedness, education and cultural affairs. Within the Odesa City Council, the Department of International Relations, Culture and Marketing is the main body responsible for matters related to the city's World Heritage status.

At the national level, the MCSC serves as the highest authority for cultural heritage protection under the Law on the Protection of Cultural Heritage, with oversight and monitoring responsibilities extending to all monuments, including World Heritage properties. **However, given Odesa's designation as a Historic Settlement, the municipal authorities also bear legally defined responsibilities.** This dual framework presents an opportunity to strengthen governance by developing and implementing targeted legal instruments that facilitate the coordinated, efficient, and context-sensitive management of urban World Heritage properties. In particular, it could provide a basis for enhancing regulatory mechanisms tailored to the specific needs of the Historic Centre of Odesa, thereby supporting the preservation of its OUV while addressing the challenges of a dynamic urban environment.

Effective management of the World Heritage property therefore requires structured cooperation between the City of Odesa, the Regional Administration and the MCSC. This coordination is the cornerstone of a functional governance framework for the site.

**To move forward, it is essential to clearly map the existing ownership and management structures.** This process should identify all stakeholders, define their roles and support the design of an appropriate organisational model for World Heritage management. It should also



inform cooperation strategies and the development of effective communication tools. **Ideally, under the leadership of the City Council, this preparatory work should begin prior to the formal designation of a management body to ensure a collaborative and timely approach to both the development and future implementation of the Management Plan.**



*Photo 13. Building on Prymorskyi Boulevard owned by the Odesa City Council, intended to house the Department of International Relations, Culture and Marketing of the Odesa City Council once funds have been secured for its rehabilitation. © UNESCO*

The local community also has a crucial role to play as ‘co-owners’ of the heritage property. Their involvement in management processes is essential and may require targeted awareness raising and the establishment of communication protocols tailored to different stakeholder groups. In addition to academic institutions and professional organisations such as ICOMOS Ukraine, ICOM, Union of Architects, there are a number of active NGOs and informal heritage groups – including initiatives such as the Museum for Change and the network of museums ‘Secrets of Underground Odesa’ – which should be considered as valuable partners in conservation efforts.

**The mission strongly recommends** a participatory and inclusive approach to the management of the Historic Centre of Odesa. This approach should balance heritage protection with the everyday needs and aspirations of the city’s inhabitants. Importantly, protection must be understood in a holistic sense – **focused on preserving the OUV of the property as a whole, rather than being narrowly limited to the protection of individual buildings.** This integrated vision will need to be supported by legislative reform, as the current

legal framework is predominantly geared towards individual monuments rather than urban heritage ensembles. In this context, the *Cultural Development Strategy of Odesa 2025–2035*, developed under the EU4Culture programme, may offer a valuable framework to guide future efforts related to the management of the World Heritage property.

### ***Heritage Impact Assessments***

At present, HIA are not required by law in Ukraine and, as such, are not applied to developments or changes proposed within the World Heritage property or its buffer zone. However, the Law on EIA requires an EIA for certain types of projects listed, although this list included in the Law is not exhaustive. This law does not provide a formal basis for conducting an EIA. The Law on the Protection of Cultural Heritage introduces provisions for assessing the impact on the value of the World Heritage property, a responsibility assigned to the 'management body'. In addition, the law requires that the World Heritage Committee be informed of planned changes and that its recommendations be considered binding.

The existing legislative gap requires thorough analysis and potentially legal amendments to establish an effective mechanism for assessing the impact of developments on the property's OUV and its defining attributes. Incorporating HIA procedures into the legal framework as a mandatory step before any development within the property or its buffer zone is especially crucial given ongoing war damage, reconstruction plans, and the current spatial planning regulations, which often prioritise new construction.

The absence of a clearly defined and detailed set of attributes conveying the OUV of the property represents a major constraint, particularly in relation to the preparation and implementation of HIAs that focus specifically on the OUV. While integrating HIA procedures into national legislation may require time – especially in the context of the ongoing war – it is essential that immediate efforts are directed toward identifying, articulating, and documenting the key attributes of the Historic Centre of Odesa. This foundational work will be critical in guiding future recovery and development processes. During the mission, reference was made to major infrastructure projects proposed north of the World Heritage property, in the extensive marshland between the Khadzhybey Limans (Dniester estuaries) and the Black Sea, in proximity to the proposed buffer zone. These developments may have a significant impact on the setting of the property. It is therefore imperative that they are subject to OUV-centred HIAs prior to implementation, ensuring that any potential adverse effects are carefully assessed and mitigated. Taking proactive steps in this regard will strengthen the city's capacity to manage post-war recovery and future investments in a way that safeguards the OUV of the property over the long term.



Photo 14. Archival photo of the tourist terminal in operation © UNESCO

**The mission recommends** that the State Party develop and integrate into Ukrainian legislation consistent requirements for the use of impact assessments in World Heritage properties, in accordance with the provisions of the Law on the Protection of Cultural Heritage. The methodology outlined in the *Guidance and Toolkit for Impact Assessments in a World Heritage Context*<sup>10</sup> should be considered in the development of internal guidelines for impact assessments, as requested by the World Heritage Committee in its Decision **46 COM 7A.6** (2024). Reference to relevant international charters and cooperation with international professional technical organisations would further enrich the process. In addition, training courses and capacity-building initiatives may be needed to support the implementation of this mechanism, particularly in relation to the destruction of cultural heritage and the needs of urban reconstruction.

Furthermore, the **mission recommends** that the State Party consistently apply paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention by informing the World Heritage Committee of any intention to undertake or authorise major restoration or new construction projects within the property, its buffer zone or wider setting. Such notifications should be made prior to any irreversible decisions, enabling the Committee to assist in identifying appropriate solutions. Given the property's size and complexity, it is neither practical nor necessary to report systematically on every minor development. However, to facilitate effective communication and optimise the use of international assistance, the Mission suggests that the updated management plan incorporate clear criteria for identifying potential impacts at the earliest stages of project design. This framework will allow initial assessments of individual proposals to determine whether formal notification to the World Heritage Centre is warranted.

<sup>10</sup> Available at <https://whc.unesco.org/en/guidance-toolkit-impact-assessments/>.



This approach should be explicitly embedded in the revised Management Plan. Although relevant provisions may already exist within national legislation, their formal integration into the Management Plan would enhance legal clarity, strengthen implementation, and provide a more coherent framework for enforcement. Internal guidelines for HIAs should be developed in close consultation with the Advisory Bodies and the World Heritage Centre. These guidelines should be submitted for review and approval by the World Heritage Committee as part of the ongoing revision of the Management Plan and the development of the DSOCR.

### **ISSUE 3: Tools to Assess and Monitor the State of Conservation of the Property and Identification of Tangible and Intangible Aspects of the City's Multi-Ethnic and Multicultural Heritage**

*Terms of reference 2.c and 2.g*

In the nomination dossier, the State Party outlines key areas to be addressed by the future monitoring system. These include the technical condition of the built heritage, the methods and quality of restoration work, and the impact of natural and anthropogenic factors on the property. In addition, the system is intended to assess the effectiveness of existing protection and conservation measures, as well as the regulatory controls on new development and construction activities. However, the proposed framework remains largely conceptual and further development is required to operationalise a comprehensive indicator-based monitoring system capable of informing adaptive management.

The available basic information and documentation pertain primarily to historic buildings registered as monuments. Legal protection currently covers 1,354 individually listed monuments situated within the boundaries of the World Heritage property. However, a substantial number of buildings and structures within the site remain unrecognised as significant and are not registered as monuments.

An initial inventory of Odesa's historic buildings was undertaken between 2006 and 2007, with a focus on the central historic district. This effort formed part of the revision of the Historical and Architectural Reference (Protection) Plan and was primarily based on visual assessments. As a result, the inventory consisted of simplified documentation cards accompanied by photographic records for each site. The documentation encompassed buildings of both local and national significance, as well as key infrastructural elements, including notable views and panoramas. While this inventory represents a valuable foundation, it is now significantly outdated and requires revision to align with current national standards for the legal protection of World Heritage properties.

The Historical and Architectural Reference Plan, an integral part of the General Plan of Odesa, draws upon a rich body of archival material documenting the city's urban, architectural, and social development. These resources are held in both local and national repositories, including the State Archives of the Odesa Oblast, the Odesa Museum of History and Local Lore, and the Russian State Historical Archive in St Petersburg.

While various publications have addressed aspects of Odesa's heritage, a comprehensive study that integrates both its tangible and intangible dimensions has yet to be undertaken. Similarly, a detailed historical analysis and systematic inventory of the built environment – fundamental for identifying the attributes that support the property's OUV and for establishing effective monitoring indicators – remains to be initiated. At present, there is no formal assessment of the condition of the built heritage. Since the property's inscription, no technical evaluation or condition survey has been conducted. Furthermore, a structured programme for assessing the physical state of individual buildings and associated infrastructure is not yet in place. This situation is primarily attributed to limited financial and human resources at both the local and national levels.

A pilot project has been launched to carry out a preliminary survey and develop an inventory for two blocks within the historic centre of Odesa. The primary objective of this initiative is to

formulate a methodology that can be applied to a more comprehensive assessment of the entire historic centre, which is subdivided into seven districts, each characterised by distinct architectural features. Subject to the outcomes of the pilot project, the proposed inventory for the Historic Centre of Odesa would, at a minimum, include the following elements:

- Information on the authorship and date of construction, together with a brief historical background of the building;
- A description of the construction technology and architectural features;
- Contextual characteristics of the building within the urban fabric;
- Volumetric and spatial data, including plan dimensions and building height;
- A preliminary assessment of the technical condition and state of conservation of the building.

The inventory is intended to serve as a baseline for the development of relevant monitoring indicators. Inventories and related sources of information are fundamental to the planning of conservation activities and the establishment of priorities, particularly in the context of risk preparedness and emergency response, both of which are especially critical in times of war. Given that the term 'inventory' encompasses a broad spectrum of data – ranging from city-wide urban characteristics to details at the level of individual structures – and considering both the current emergency context and the scale of the property, the mission recommends the implementation of systematic, high-quality photographic documentation. This should focus on building façades and key landmarks within the historic centre and be complemented by aerial photography to record rooftop conditions, thereby enhancing the value of existing satellite imagery. Documentation should also include courtyards, significant interior spaces hidden within urban blocks, and other culturally important interiors. This practical and streamlined inventory approach should be integrated with existing architectural surveys and progressively expanded through ongoing documentation efforts. A structured programme should be established to guide this process, incorporating clear priorities and a phased implementation strategy. The Odesa City Council is encouraged to ensure the allocation of adequate human and financial resources, including measures to actively engage property owners and residents in this effort, with additional support to be mobilised through national programmes where appropriate.

It is equally important to document and inventory dissonant heritage. Where certain elements are considered for removal – whether due to their potential negative impact on the property's OUV or other considerations – such decisions must be firmly grounded in comprehensive documentation and informed by a shared, in-depth understanding of the property. This includes its universal, national, and local values, as well as its socio-ecological context. The process should be inclusive, participatory, and meticulously recorded. Given the inherent subjectivity involved in heritage appraisal, it is important to recognise that interpretations may shift over time, potentially uncovering layers of meaning previously overlooked. Moreover, dissonant heritage can generate complex questions and tensions which, when addressed with thoughtfulness and sensitivity, have the potential to enrich the city's identity and contribute to a more diverse and resilient urban fabric.

At the time of finalising this report, discussions on the identification and inventorying of key attributes and related monitoring indicators are ongoing within the framework of the UNESCO/ICOMOS Technical Assistance Programme. This initiative supports the revision of the draft Management Plan for the World Heritage property *Historic Centre of Odesa* and the development of the DSCOR. These efforts are made possible through the support of the UNESCO/Japan Funds-in-Trust and the World Heritage Fund.

The definition of attributes underpinning the OUV of the Historic Centre of Odesa is closely linked to the identification of both tangible and intangible elements of the city's multi-ethnic and multicultural heritage. This was explicitly requested by the World Heritage Committee at the time of inscription. However, the corresponding study has not yet been initiated.



Municipal representatives highlighted Odesa's distinctive social fabric, noting that the city is home to approximately 130 nationalities and adherents of all major religions, positioning it as Ukraine's multicultural capital. This diversity reflects the significant interchange of human values within Eastern Europe, as embodied in the historic centre's heterogeneous architectural styles. These developed during the city's rapid growth in the 19th century and illustrate the coexistence of multiple cultural influences, shaped by Odesa's geographical position at the crossroads of Europe and Asia. It is this rich synthesis that, among other factors, justified the city's inscription on the World Heritage List.

The mission identified the urgent need to initiate a comprehensive study to document and analyse Odesa's multicultural character, both historically and in contemporary life. Such a study should contribute to the identification of attributes underpinning the property's OUV and inform its future protection and management.

Recognising that the OUV of the property is closely tied to Odesa's long-standing tradition of multiculturalism and multi-ethnicity, ICOMOS, in its evaluation of the nomination, recommended the revision of the Management Plan to include targeted measures for identifying, conserving, and promoting both the tangible and intangible aspects of this heritage. The World Heritage Committee further requested that the boundaries of the nominated property be extended in certain areas to incorporate all relevant attributes and spatial evidence of how multiculturalism shaped the city's architecture and urban planning in the century following its foundation.

These actions should form part of a coherent and implementable strategy, including an interpretation policy to support the presentation of the World Heritage property and enhance its understanding among all stakeholders, including the local communities and the general public.

Interpretation is an essential element of heritage conservation and a key means of enhancing public appreciation and understanding of cultural heritage sites. It encompasses a wide range of activities designed to raise awareness and deepen understanding, such as print and electronic publications, public lectures, on-site and associated off-site installations, educational programmes, community initiatives, as well as ongoing research, training, and evaluation of the interpretation process.

A comprehensive interpretation policy for the Historic Centre of Odesa has not yet been developed and, in the view of the mission, will depend on the outcomes of the aforementioned study on the city's multicultural character. Several outputs from the EU4Culture programme – funded by the European Union since January 2021 to support the cultural and creative sectors in Eastern Partnership countries, particularly in non-capital cities – may offer valuable contributions to this process. In Odesa, these include the *Reference Book on Preserving the Cultural Heritage of Odesa* and the *Guide to Designing Beautiful Odesa Signs*, both of which serve to raise awareness and foster appreciation of the city's heritage. These resources could serve as useful reference materials in the development of an interpretation strategy.

Additionally, the *ICOMOS Charter for the Interpretation and Presentation of Cultural Heritage Sites (2008)* provides relevant guidance and international best practices that could inform the formulation of a coherent and context-sensitive interpretation policy.

#### **ISSUE 4: Revision of the Draft Management Plan to include Disaster, Climate Change and other Risk Preparedness Measures, as well as Implementation Measures for Emergency Responses**

##### *Terms of Reference 2.e*

The State Party has not yet initiated the revision of the draft management plan submitted with the nomination dossier, which is identified as a key component of the ongoing technical assistance programme aimed at strengthening the site's management framework.

There is a wealth of accessible international guidance and tools that can support analytical processes, inform the design of a robust management structure, and facilitate capacity building of decision-makers and stakeholders at national and local levels. In particular, the World Heritage resource manuals – including the *Enhancing Our Heritage Toolkit 2.0 (EoH 2.0)*, *Managing Cultural World Heritage*, *Guidance and Toolkit for Impact Assessments in a World Heritage Context*, and *Managing Disaster Risks for World Heritage* – provide practical methodologies and best practices that could be of significant benefit in the Ukrainian context. **The mission therefore recommends** that these manuals be translated into Ukrainian and, where appropriate, supplemented with contextual notes to enhance their relevance and applicability.

Raising awareness of the World Heritage property and its significance is essential. One basic measure is the translation and wide dissemination of the SOUV of the Historic Centre of Odesa, which seems not to have been yet undertaken. The SOUV is a key reference document for the monitoring, management and protection of the property. It lies at the heart of the implementation of the World Heritage Convention and should serve as a guiding framework for both international and national decision-making processes concerning World Heritage properties, including those on the List of World Heritage in Danger.

**The mission strongly recommends** that the full Statement of OUV be translated into Ukrainian and made widely available to key stakeholders and the general public. Communicating its content and legal status will greatly enhance understanding of the property and support informed engagement in its protection and management.

### ***Emergency response***

During the mission, the risk of fires was identified as a primary threat to Odesa's built heritage, and therefore the built fabric of the property. The ongoing war exacerbates this risk, both directly, through fire damage caused by military strikes, and indirectly, as a result of diminished levels of maintenance and care due to various destabilising factors. It is therefore imperative that relevant preventive measures be urgently reinforced to mitigate these threats and safeguard the heritage assets.

In response to the ongoing full-scale invasion by the Russian Federation, the Odesa City Council has established a special commission. The remit of this commission is to conduct rapid assessments of damage to cultural heritage sites within the city. This Commission, composed of City Council members and representatives from the Odesa State Academy of Civil Engineering and Architecture, performs visual inspections of damaged heritage sites. A 'defective act' is then signed to document the condition of the properties and determine the required intervention for their protection and preservation.

During the course of the mission, a number of damaged sites were visited, including significant institutions such as the House of Scientists, the House of the Archaeological Museum, the Odesa Literary Museum, the Odesa National Scientific Library, the Odesa Regional Philharmonic, the Odesa National Fine Arts Museum, the Museum of Western and Eastern Art, and Spaso Preobrazhensky Cathedral. The extent of the damages has been documented. The response actions are proceeding in accordance with the established regulations. Depending on the situation, the buildings have been cleaned and made safe, and some are undergoing conservation and reconstruction work. The manner in which the protective measures are carried out does not raise any major concerns except some generic issues noticed.



*Photo 15. Odesa Museum of Western and Eastern Art © K. Piotrowska*





*Photo 16. Historic building on Teatralnyi Lane marked with the Blue Shield emblem, indicating protection under the 1954 Hague Convention. © K. Piotrowska*

It should be emphasised that the staff at the individual facilities visited during the mission demonstrated remarkable commitment and concern for securing the sites and maintaining operations despite the very challenging circumstances. The dedication of municipal units deserves special recognition. The incredible efforts of volunteers and volunteering employees were also duly noted.

Safety and restoration work following missile and drone strikes typically extends beyond the immediate building and its surrounding security measures. In the case of the House of Scientists, the damaged retaining walls and unstable ground due to a landslide are causing progressive deterioration of the building's structure. For reasons unknown to the mission, no ground stabilisation work has been carried here out since the attack in 2023. Given the construction of historic buildings and the presence of underground voids, structural and environmental engineering interventions may be necessary. When such risks are identified, structural protection should be prioritised, particularly for key historic buildings.





*Photo 17. Collapsed retaining wall and urgent repairs of residential houses at the Viiskovy Descent Street, back to the House of Scientists © K. Piotrowska*

The House of the Archaeological Museum, owned by the National Academy of Sciences, exemplifies the challenges facing Odesa. Founded in 1825 and housed in a purpose-built structure dating from 1885, the museum contains one of Ukraine's largest archaeological collections. Although the building has sustained war-related damage, the current near-complete absence of staff poses a greater risk to the collection's safety.

Museum for Change, a non-governmental organisation, coordinated the removal and safe storage of 20th-century stained glass from the Philharmonic, supported by ALIPH, relocating it to an adjacent building. This emergency response was conducted with remote professional guidance from Corpus Vitrearum International. The glass fragments were documented, numbered, and initially stored on ventilated wooden boards before being wrapped in acid-free paper for further storage. Although the rescue operation was professionally executed, it was carried out on an ad hoc basis without formal legal procedures and the temporary storage facility currently lacks adequate security measures.

While national legislation has established a special fund to compensate for war damage, there is currently a significant gap in economic compensation for residents living in buildings designated as monuments of local or national importance. The MCSC has indicated that the existing compensation policy is designed to prevent financial support from being used in a way that could harm monuments, in particular by ensuring that repairs are carried out using appropriate materials and methods in line with conservation principles.

Under the UNESCO/Japan Funds-in-Trust Emergency Assistance Programme for Ukraine, a cultural heritage project component has been established to strengthen monitoring, emergency response and preparedness at damaged sites, including the World Heritage-listed Historic Centre of Odesa. As part of this initiative jointly implemented by UNESCO and ICOMOS, technical assistance is being provided to revise the draft management plan for the site. This will include the development of an Emergency Preparedness Plan, as well as the establishment of a DSOCR and a programme of corrective measures to facilitate the removal

of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger. The guidelines developed through this programme are to support the State Party's efforts to protect the property.

Risk management is a crucial component of the management system for any World Heritage property. In accordance with paragraph 118 of the *Operational Guidelines*, States Parties include should disaster, climate change, and other risk preparedness as elements in their World Heritage site management system, including any plans and training strategies. To ensure consistent action, risks should be classified following international definitions and standards. The identification and categorisation of risks – both slow-onset and rapid-onset – within a Risk Management Plan (RMP) is essential for developing effective management strategies tailored to the specific context of each site. This requires a joint assessment, beginning with a hazard evaluation of the site and the definition of associated risks.

The United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR) classifies war as a disaster. Consequently, emergency management should be integrated into the Disaster Management System (DMS), with emergency preparedness as a core element. Disaster risk management (DRM), alongside the phases of emergency preparedness and response (EPR), requires clear definitions at strategic, tactical, and operational levels within Ukraine's broader Risk Management System. DRM comprises four interconnected steps: mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery. These steps form a continuous, dynamic process rather than isolated stages and may occur simultaneously. Effective communication and coordination are critical for a responsive and adaptable approach, particularly for extensive heritage landscapes such as the Historic Centre of Odesa, which includes diverse functions like ports, train stations, and administrative buildings. While EPR plans must be tailored to the specific characteristics of each site, the fundamental steps remain consistent across all cases.

The DRM and its EPR Plan component should be closely linked. To implement the EPR Plan effectively, it is vital to define the principal authorised and responsible institutions, along with supporting bodies, and to clarify their roles and actions during emergencies. **Individual EPR plans should be developed for specific heritage buildings, for the entire World Heritage property, and as a general plan for the city as a whole. These plans must be concise, clear, and structured in a step-by-step format to facilitate implementation, monitoring, updating, and ensure overall effectiveness.**

**The mission highlights the importance of conducting a hazard assessment for 'The Historic Centre of Odesa', followed by the identification of risks arising from those hazards. Furthermore, it recommends that risk identification, and the development and implementation of relevant emergency preparedness plans and response protocols, be incorporated into current regulations, following guidance provided by international frameworks.**

Additionally, the mission also recommends an amendment to the compensation policy to provide financial assistance to residents living in war-affected heritage sites, ensuring that they receive the necessary support without compromising the integrity of the properties.

Furthermore, in the context of the ongoing war, it is essential to develop, as a matter of priority, a policy for the rehabilitation, repair, and reconstruction of historic buildings that fully reflects World Heritage requirements. This should be accompanied by the implementation of appropriate legal instruments to prevent potential misuse that could compromise the integrity and authenticity of the Historic Centre of Odesa. In doing so, the State Party may draw upon relevant international charters, including the ICOMOS and ICCROM *Guidance on Post-Disaster and Post-Conflict Recovery and Reconstruction for Heritage Places of Cultural Significance and World Heritage Cultural Properties*<sup>11</sup>.

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<sup>11</sup> Available at <https://www.iccrom.org/publication/guidance-post-disaster-and-post-conflict-recovery-and-reconstruction-heritage-places>.



## ISSUE 5: Establishment of an Adequate Buffer Zone

### *Terms of Reference 2.f*

At the time of inscription, and based on ICOMOS's evaluation of the nomination dossier, the World Heritage Committee requested that the State Party submit a map and geographical coordinates showing the revised boundaries of the property. These boundaries were to be wider than those initially proposed in the nomination dossier and exclude the port area, encompassing the historic city area as it had developed by the end of the 19th century. The revised boundaries were to align with those of the Integrated Protection Zone as outlined in the General Plan of Odesa, with the port area designated as part of the buffer zone. ICOMOS's evaluation noted that, although the port played a significant role in shaping the city's significance and the connection between the city and sea remains, the port no longer reflects its 19th-century layout and function. Therefore, it was not considered a key attribute of the nominated property. Since April 2024, the map of the World Heritage property has been in conformity with the boundaries inscribed by the Committee.



*Photo 18. Historic building located in the Port of Odesa © K. Piotrowska*

In its Decisions **18 EXT.COM 5.2** (2023) and **46 COM 7A.6** (2024), the World Heritage Committee also requested an extension of the buffer zone surrounding the Historic Centre of Odesa to encompass the immediate setting of the modified property boundaries, including the port area. The Committee also called on the State Party to clarify how the buffer zone will be managed to support the protection of the property's OUV.

In January 2025, the State Party submitted a proposal for a minor modification to the property's buffer zone. The current buffer zone covers 618.8 ha and includes the port area as well as land extending from Frantsuzskiy (French) Boulevard to the coastline. However, it should be noted that the property would not be fully protected, as there is no buffer zone to the southwest or the northernmost part.

The proposed extension would increase the size of the buffer zone to 864.03 ha. The revised boundaries are described as running along Serhiy Varlamov Street, extending northward along

the southeastern edge of the sanatorium buildings, passing through the western side of the Botanical Garden, and continuing through several streets, including Semynarska, Pyrohovskyi Lane, and Mechnykova Street, among others. The extension also includes significant architectural complexes, such as the Odesa State Academy of Civil Engineering and Architecture, and several buildings along Mechnykova Street.

The primary aim of the proposed extension is to provide additional protection for the property while aligning the buffer zone with the historical boundaries of Odesa, thereby creating a consistent and logical system of land regulations in the city centre. The proposed boundaries align with the Historical and Architectural Reference Plan. The plan, which was approved by the then Ministry of Culture and Tourism in 2008, defines the boundaries of Odesa's historic areas, including the Central Historic Area and the French Boulevard Area.

While the proposal for the minor boundary modification will be subject to a World Heritage Committee's decision at its 47th session in 2025<sup>12</sup>, it should be noted that the revision of the regulatory framework governing the buffer zone was suspended due to the ongoing war. The delineation of the buffer zone must be guided by a prior identification of the property's attributes that convey its OUV, ensuring the buffer zone's spatial and functional alignment with the aim of adding a layer of protection of these attributes. Furthermore, the delineation process should be informed by a systematic analysis of both existing and potential threats. Ideally, threats should be assessed in relation to the specific nature and vulnerability of the identified attributes. The establishment of buffer zone boundaries and the introduction of associated functional regimes must follow a context-specific methodology, grounded in local conditions and supported by appropriate technical studies. At present, no comprehensive functional or visual studies are available to support such delineation.

The relationship between land, city, port and sea is critical to understanding Odesa's urban development and current structure. It is therefore essential to identify key drivers of growth, trace historical layers of urbanisation at both architectural and urban scales, and analyse functional and visual interconnections. A historical and functional analysis would be a valuable addition to the project, as it would help to identify key attributes, inform legal protection measures, and support the formulation of effective management strategies, establishment of the buffer zone including. In order to ensure a comprehensive approach, it is essential to complement this with a systematic mapping of existing and potential threats to heritage properties.

Furthermore, the Law of Ukraine on the Protection of Cultural Heritage stipulates that any modifications to buffer zone boundaries must be supported by appropriate technical documentation. Failure to do so could result in legal challenges to the changes.

The **mission recommends** that any modification of the buffer zone boundaries be preceded by comprehensive historical, spatial and functional analyses, and be carried out through a transparent and participatory consultation process. The definition of the buffer zone should be accompanied by the development of differentiated regulations, tailored to its various sectors. It is essential that the boundaries of the World Heritage property and its buffer zone are officially registered in the national cadastre and integrated into land-use planning documentation.

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<sup>12</sup> ICOMOS evaluation on the proposed minor modification to the buffer zone and resulting recommendation to refer it back to the State Party is available in [Document WHC/25/47.COM/INF.8B1.Add](https://whc.unesco.org/documents/whc2547cominf8b1add).



## V. DESIRED STATE OF CONSERVATION FOR REMOVAL FROM THE LIST OF WORLD HERITAGE IN DANGER

*Terms of Reference 3*

The List of World Heritage in Danger was established under the World Heritage Convention as a mechanism to support States Parties when properties face serious and specific threats – whether potential or ascertained. For a property to be removed from this List, it must be demonstrated that it is no longer under threat, in accordance with paragraph 191 of the Operational Guidelines. Furthermore, the consequences of the threat to the property's OUV must have been effectively addressed. This determination should be based on clear evidence of threat reduction, including an assessment of the extent to which the property's ability to meet the criteria for inscription has been restored. This may involve the rehabilitation of deteriorated or altered attributes. Additionally, the property's protection and management systems must demonstrate sufficient capacity to prevent the recurrence of similar threats in the future.

It is the World Heritage Committee's prerogative to, in consultation with the State Party (OGs, paragraphs 183-184), adopt a DSOCR, along with corrective measures required to achieve this state. The DSOCR should specifically address the adverse impacts and circumstances that led to the property's inscription on the List, outlining how these threats will be mitigated. It must define the state of conservation to be attained to permit removal from the List in Danger, specify necessary measures, establish a clear timeline for implementation, and include measurable indicators to monitor progress.

It is important to emphasise that the inscription of a property on the List of World Heritage in Danger is intended as a supportive mechanism, enabling State Parties to overcome challenges and mobilise both direct and indirect international assistance. The DSOCR serves as a strategic instrument within this framework, defining a clear roadmap agreed upon by the State Party and the World Heritage Committee for the effective protection and management of the World Heritage property.

The 'Historic Centre of Odesa' was inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger as a consequence of the ongoing war in Ukraine. ICOMOS evaluation report noted in its conclusions that: *"the current conflict in Ukraine poses a threat to the historic centre of the city of Odesa. The unstable situation calls for decisive action to preserve its urban heritage."* Following this, the report offers observations and recommendations for the Committee, including calls to strengthen legal protections against inappropriate development, integrate Heritage Impact Assessment mechanisms into legislation, develop comprehensive inventories and identify the tangible and intangible attributes of the property's OUV, prioritise conservation programmes for buildings at risk, implement a monitoring system, and revise the draft management plan to incorporate disaster preparedness, climate change, and other risk response measures.

To date, the State Party of Ukraine has not initiated the development of the DSOCR. The mission recommends that all issues identified during the nomination evaluation process – and subsequently confirmed by the mission – that relate to the impact of the war on the property's OUV, both during and following a potential cessation of hostilities, be addressed in the development of the corrective measures programme aimed at achieving the DSOCR. These issues include the legal framework, conservation standards, and the overall effectiveness of management. The vulnerabilities of the built heritage, along with the scale of the conservation challenges, are outcomes that may be significantly exacerbated by the ongoing war.

Key thematic areas requiring comprehensive examination and resolution within the DSOCR process include:

- Identification and mapping of tangible and intangible attributes related to the property's OUV;

- Strengthening and updating of the legal framework for heritage protection, ensuring alignment with World Heritage requirements and the needs of local residents;
- Expanding and improving the protection of historical cultural objects/sites aligned with the identification of the attributes underlying the World Heritage property's OUV;
- Compilation of detailed inventories and establishment of reliable data sources through ongoing monitoring and research;
- Formulation of strategies for temporary stabilisation and repair during the ongoing war, and for full rehabilitation, repair and reconstruction following the cessation of hostilities;
- Development and approval of appropriate policies for rehabilitation, repair and reconstruction by the World Heritage Committee;
- Improvement of maintenance practices and enforcement of higher conservation standards;
- Inclusion of disaster risk management, climate adaptation, and emergency response measures in the revised management plan;
- Reinforcement of urban planning instruments and building regulations to ensure effective development control;
- Finalisation of appropriate buffer zone boundaries and implementation of an effective, adequately resourced management system.

Each of these categories represents substantial challenges in their own right, which are further intensified by the impact of the war.

The World Heritage Committee has adopted a guiding document (Decision **37 COM 7A.40**) designed to assist State Parties in this undertaking. Furthermore, detailed guidance on the preparation and procedural aspects of the DSOCR is being provided through the aforementioned Technical Assistance programme.

In this context, the mission recommends that the development of the DSOCR and its accompanying programme of corrective measures be regarded not only as a statutory obligation under the World Heritage Convention for all properties inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger, but also as a strategic planning opportunity. This process should serve to guide the conservation and management of the property through the critical years ahead. An essential initial step would be to establish a dedicated working group tasked specifically with this endeavour. This group should include representatives from all relevant levels of government, possessing the necessary expertise and authority in the key thematic areas identified previously. Furthermore, the mission recommends the State Party to fully utilise the technical assistance available from the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies, supported by the World Heritage Fund. The *Guidance note: DSOCR*<sup>13</sup> can be a useful resource in this regard.

Equally important is the use of both the DSOCR development process and the final DSOCR document and corrective measures programme as a framework to coordinate and attract additional international support for the protection of the 'Historic Centre of Odesa' as a World Heritage property.

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<sup>13</sup> <https://whc.unesco.org/document/123577>

## VI. CONCLUSIONS

The Historic Centre of Odesa continues to face significant threats as a result of the ongoing full-scale war in Ukraine. The war has exacerbated long-standing challenges related to the preservation and management of this culturally and historically important urban ensemble. These include a complex legal and institutional framework, fragmented governance structures, unclear ownership arrangements, longstanding underinvestment, and the heightened vulnerability of heritage assets to both neglect and war-related damage. Despite these difficulties, the Historic Centre retains a distinctive cultural identity, profound historical value, and vibrant urban character. Its continued protection and future revitalisation require a strategic, inclusive, and interdisciplinary approach.

A key immediate priority is the identification, documentation, and mapping of the attributes that convey the property's OUV. This foundational task must be conducted through a phased and inclusive process, underpinned by thematic research and condition assessments. It should also be aligned with the legal clarification of the property's boundaries and protection regimes.

The current conservation efforts should be consolidated into a cohesive, long-term strategy that operates at both the architectural and urban scales. This strategy should incorporate risk assessments and HIAs, particularly for developments that have already altered the historic fabric. The use of traditional materials and techniques should be encouraged, while public awareness campaigns should engage property owners and users to foster a culture of stewardship and shared responsibility.

In the context of the ongoing war, it is essential to develop, as a matter of urgency, a policy on the rehabilitation and reconstruction of historic buildings that aligns with World Heritage requirements and relevant international charters. This should be accompanied by the implementation of appropriate legal instruments to prevent potential misuse that could undermine the integrity and authenticity of 'The Historic Centre of Odesa'.

Legal reform remains essential. Existing legislation does not yet provide adequate protection for historic urban landscape. An integrated framework, informed by the Historic Urban Landscape (HUL) Recommendation, is needed to safeguard not only individual monuments but also the broader character of the historic city and its environment. This should include clear governance mechanisms, defined institutional responsibilities, and the introduction of special regulatory instruments. The legal concept of the 'historic settlement' may offer a constructive basis for future reforms.

A comprehensive inventory of heritage assets – both tangible and intangible – should be developed, utilising archival research, field surveys, and visual documentation. This inventory should encompass buildings, courtyards, historic trees, streets, underground structures and infrastructural components, street furniture, open space facilities, and elements reflecting Odesa's multicultural heritage. In the short term, a simplified emergency inventory could be established, with the aim of expanding and refining it over time.

An updated Management Plan should be finalised and implemented, reflecting inclusive and participatory approaches. It should incorporate risk preparedness, emergency response, and climate adaptation strategies. Mapping of institutional responsibilities will be critical to the creation of a dedicated and well-resourced management body with appropriate legal authority.

Robust monitoring systems are needed to track conservation outcomes, evaluate the effectiveness of interventions, and provide early warnings of emerging risks. These systems should include measurable indicators and be aligned with local and regional monitoring frameworks, particularly in the context of environmental and conflict-related threats.

Revisions to the legal framework should also ensure the consistent integration of OUV-focused Heritage Impact Assessments into planning processes, especially for infrastructure projects in or near the property and its buffer zone.

The boundaries of the buffer zone should be re-evaluated based on historical, spatial, and functional criteria. This process should be participatory and transparent, and the final boundaries must be reflected in cadastral records and relevant planning instruments. Any proposed changes should be submitted to the World Heritage Committee in accordance with the Operational Guidelines.

Support mechanisms, including financial assistance for private owners of war-damaged historic properties, should be embedded within the wider conservation strategy to facilitate recovery while maintaining heritage integrity.

Public communication plays a crucial role in sustaining engagement and support. Translating and disseminating the Statement of OUV, along with developing a formal interpretation strategy, can enhance public understanding and involvement.

Finally, the development of a DSOCR from the List of World Heritage in Danger should be seen not only as a statutory obligation but as a strategic framework guiding future action. This process should address legislative reform, attribute identification, repair and reconstruction strategies, and risk management, while strengthening planning and governance systems. Establishing a dedicated working group with cross-sectoral expertise and institutional backing will be a vital first step. The State Party is encouraged to make full use of available international technical assistance and funding mechanisms, including through the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies.

In summary, while the Historic Centre of Odesa faces unprecedented challenges, it also holds exceptional potential. When conditions of security allow, a coordinated, well-resourced, and forward-looking approach can ensure the preservation and enhancement of the site's values—enabling the World Heritage property to continue reflecting the historical, cultural, and social vitality of Odesa for generations to come.



## VII. ANNEXES

### Annex A Terms of Reference

Joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission to the World Heritage property 'The Historic Centre of Odesa' (Ukraine)

(10-14 February 2025)

#### I. Purpose of the Reactive Monitoring mission

'The Historic Centre of Odesa' was simultaneously inscribed on the World Heritage List and the List of World Heritage in Danger in January 2023 (Decision **18 EXT COM 5.2**). In its Decision, the World Heritage Committee recommended that the State Party invite a joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission to the World Heritage property 'The Historic Centre of Odesa' to establish a Desired state of conservation and a programme of corrective measures for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger. The State Party extended an invitation for the mission on 10 April 2023. In its Decision **46 COM 7A.6** (New Delhi, 2024), the World Heritage Committee noted with appreciation this invitation and expressed its regret that the mission could not take place due to the ongoing security situation.

With regard to the above-mentioned purpose, the mission shall:

1. Assess the overall state of conservation of the property and identify factors and conservation issues that impact on its Outstanding Universal Value (OUV), including its conditions of integrity, protection and management.
2. Evaluate progress made by the State Party in the implementation of the recommendations made by the Committee in its Decision **18 EXT COM 5.2** at the time of inscription, in particular with regard to:
  - a. Reinforcing the legal regulation for the Integrated Protection Zone to protect the attributes of the property against unsuitable development,
  - b. Integrating Heritage Impact Assessment mechanisms into the legal framework as a pre-requisite for development projects and activities that are planned for implementation within the property or its buffer zone,
  - c. Developing an inventory and indicators for the assessment of the state of conservation of the property together with developing and implementing a monitoring system,
  - d. Continuing the implementation of conservation programmes with priorities given to buildings at risk and areas that need urgent stabilisation or conservation interventions,
  - e. Revising the draft management plan to include disaster, climate change and other risk preparedness measures, as well as implementation measures for emergency responses;
  - f. Extending the buffer zone to encompass the immediate setting of the modified boundaries as well as the port area and setting out how the buffer zone will be managed to support the OUV of the property,
  - g. Developing a study to identify tangible and intangible aspects of multi-ethnic and multicultural heritage of the city and developing measures for an interpretation policy.

3. Review progress with measures necessary to establish a Desired state of conservation and a programme of corrective measures for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger.

## **II. Organisation of the Reactive Monitoring mission**

The State Party, through its competent authorities, should ensure that the mission is provided with all relevant information and documentation to enable it to review and assess the issues listed in paragraphs 1-3 above and that the mission is able to carry out on-site visits for a comprehensive inspection of the property. Should additional information be required, as identified during the mission, it should be provided by the State Party no later than two weeks after the end of the mission.

The State Party is requested to facilitate the necessary consultations through working meetings with stakeholders, including government authorities, the property management authority, and any other relevant stakeholders, and to facilitate field visits to key locations within the property and to viewpoints over the property in the wider setting.

In order to facilitate the preparation of the mission, the State Party should cooperate with the World Heritage Centre and ICOMOS in preparing a detailed mission programme and a list of persons and institutions to be consulted, which should be submitted in draft form to the World Heritage Centre for review as soon as possible no later than 10 January 2025.

The following documents should be provided to the World Heritage Centre as soon as possible and no later than 15 days prior to the mission:

- Historical and Architectural Reference Plan of Odesa,
- General Plan of Odesa,
- Law of Ukraine on Cultural Heritage Protection and any other national, regional or local heritage or planning laws and regulations applicable to the World Heritage property,
- relevant records of the State Register of Immovable Historical Monuments of Ukraine,
- the outcomes of the project 'Support for the Implementation of the Odesa Cultural Development Strategy',
- any other information available pertaining to paragraphs 1-3 of the Terms of Reference.

The State Party is encouraged to submit documents in English. However, the World Heritage Centre may be able to assist with translation from Ukrainian into English, provided the documents are received as soon as possible.

In accordance with established UNESCO and ICOMOS practice, their experts will not address the media or discuss the findings and recommendations of the mission, which should be presented only in the final report of the mission.

## **III. Report to be delivered**

Following the mission, the World Heritage Centre and ICOMOS will prepare a concise report in accordance with the terms of reference of the mission for consideration by the World Heritage Committee at its 47<sup>th</sup> session. The mission report will follow the report format of the World Heritage Centre and Advisory Bodies Reactive Monitoring mission. Prior to finalisation, the report will be transmitted in electronic format to the State Party for verification of any factual errors.

## **Annex B      Composition of the Mission Team**

Katarzyna Piotrowska, ICOMOS International

Berta de Sancristóbal, Head, Europe and North America Unit, UNESCO World Heritage Centre

Supported by Stefanie Grüssinger, Project Officer, UNESCO Antenna in Kyiv

## **Annex C      Mission Programme as implemented**

**Day 1: Tuesday, 11 February 2025**

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### **Working Session 1: Welcome by Mayor Odesa, at Mayor's office, City Council 10:00-12:00h**

1. Trukhanov Gennadiy, Mayor of Odesa
2. Pylypenko Volodymyr, Advisor to the Minister of Culture and Strategic Communications of Ukraine on International Law
3. Filatov Oleksandr, First Deputy Mayor of Odesa
4. Attilio Mulliani, Head of the Office of Restoration and Urbanism under the Mayor of Odesa, Advisor to the Mayor on International Cooperation, Ambassador of Odesa to the Italian Republic
5. Liptuga Ivan, Director of the Department of International Relations, Culture and Marketing of Odesa City Council
6. Stoyanov Fedir, Deputy Director of the Department - Head of the Office for UNESCO and Cultural Heritage Protection of the Department of International Relations, Culture and Marketing of Odesa City Council
7. Kasimov Marat, Acting Director of the Department of Architecture and Urban Development of Odesa City Council - Chief Architect of the city
8. Kovrov Anatolii, Rector of Odesa State Academy of Civil Engineering and Architecture, Professor
9. Sukhomeylo Petro, Representative of the Ukrainian Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Odesa

**Short walk with Mayor past the Odesa City Council and the Pushkin monument, a walk along the Prymorskiy Boulevard to the Potemkin stairs with view to the port and view to the building at 6, Prymorskiy Boulevard, the future Odesa Heritage Management Centre**

**Short city tour in tourism car with Kateryna Iergeeva, Odesa Literary Museum with a view at several key sites and a short visit at the Mendelevych Passage (34, Preobrazhenska Str)**

### **Working Session 2: Session on Documentation and Urban Planning, at the Department of Architecture and Urban Development of Odesa City Council, 15-16:30h**

1. Kasimov Marat, Acting Director of the Department of Architecture and Urban Development of Odesa City Council, Chief Architect of the city
2. Attilio Mulliani, Head of the Office of Restoration and Urbanism under the Mayor of Odesa, Advisor to the Mayor on International Cooperation, Ambassador of Odesa to the Italian Republic
3. Liptuga Ivan, Director of the Department of International Relations, Culture and Marketing of Odesa City Council
4. Stoyanov Fedir, Deputy Director of the Department - Head of the Office for UNESCO and Cultural Heritage Protection of the Department of International Relations, Culture and Marketing of Odesa City Council
5. Samokysh Inna Vasylivna, Head of the Legal Department, Department of Land Resources of Odesa City Council
6. Nina Anatoliivna Polishchuk, Head of the Land Management Department, Department of Land Resources of Odesa City Council

**Site visit to the House of Scientists (4, Sabaneev Most Str.), around 16:30-17:30h**

People met: Zhekova Svitlana, Director of the enterprise «House of Scientists»

**Day 2: Wednesday, 12 February 2025**

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**Working session 1: Meeting with the Head of the Odesa Regional State Military Administration, 10-11.00h**



1. Kiper Oleh, Head of the Odesa Regional State (Military) Administration
2. Shalyhailo Anton, Deputy Head of the Odesa Regional State (Military) Administration
3. Oliynyk Olena, Director of the Department of Culture, Nationalities, Religions and Protection of Cultural Heritage Objects of the Odesa Regional Military Administration
4. Vorobyova Olena, Deputy Director of the Department - Head of the Office for the Protection of Cultural Heritage Objects of the Department of Culture, Nationalities, Religions and Protection of Cultural Heritage Objects of the Odesa Regional State Administration
5. Belyaev Serhiy, Deputy Minister of Culture and Strategic Communications of Ukraine (Ukrainian architect)
6. Pylypenko Volodymyr, Advisor to the Minister of Culture and Strategic Communications of Ukraine on International Law
7. Sukhomeylo Petro, Representative of the Ukrainian Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Odesa
8. Liptuga Ivan, Director of the Department of International Relations, Culture and Marketing of Odesa City Council
9. Stoyanov Fedir, Deputy Director of the Department - Head of the Office for UNESCO and Cultural Heritage Protection of the Department of International Relations, Culture and Marketing of Odesa City Council

**Site visits** to Odesa National Art Museum, Odesa National Scientific Library, Odesa Archaeology Museum and Odesa Literary Museum (around 11.30-13.30)

People met:

- Kulai Kateryna, Acting Director of the Odesa National Art Museum
- Dyakova Darya, Director of the NGO "Museum for Change", Head of the Community Development Department of the Odesa National Art Museum
- Biriukova Iryna, Director General of the Odesa National Scientific Library
- Pistrui Ihor, Director of the Odesa Archaeological Museum of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine
- Liptuga Tetiana, Director of the Odesa Literary Museum

**Site visits** to Odesa National Academic Theatre of Opera and Ballet, Museum of Western and Eastern Art, Odesa Regional Philharmonic (15.30-18.00)

People met:

- Miulberg Sergiy, First Deputy Managing Director, Odesa National Academic Theatre of Opera and Ballet
- Poronyk Ihor, Director of the Museum of Western and Eastern Art (Abaza Palace)
- Zitser Halyna, Director of the Odesa Regional Philharmonic named after David Oistrakh
- Dyakova Darya, Director of the NGO "Museum for Change", Head of the Community Development Department of the Odesa National Art Museum

### **Day 3: Thursday, 13 February 2025**

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#### **Working session 1: Working meeting with the management of the Odesa Seaport, in the Port, 9:15-11:00**

1. Denys Pavilianiti-Karpov, Head of the Odesa Branch of USPA
2. Volodymyr Bakhchivanzhy, Deputy Head of the Odesa Branch of USPA for Operations,
3. Oleksiy Kalyuzhnyi, Deputy Head of the Odesa Branch of USPA for Port Infrastructure Development
4. Iryna Shalginskikh, Head of the Legal Service of the Odesa Branch of SE "USPA"
5. Zhanna Goncharova, Leading Engineer of the Property and Contractual Work Department
6. Belyaev Serhiy, Deputy Minister of Culture and Strategic Communications of Ukraine (Ukrainian architect)

7. Liptuga Ivan, Director of the Department of International Relations, Culture and Marketing of Odesa City Council
8. Stoyanov Fedir, Deputy Director of the Department - Head of the Office for UNESCO and Cultural Heritage Protection of the Department of International Relations, Culture and Marketing of Odesa City Council

**Working session 2: Consequences of missile and drone attacks and restoration in 'modern conditions', at the City Council, 12.15-13.45h**

1. Kovalchuk Lidiia, Department of international cooperation, culture and marketing of the Odesa City Council, Head of UNESCO division, Office for UNESCO and cultural heritage protection
2. Rymak Nataliia, Department of international cooperation, culture and marketing of the Odesa City Council, Division of UNESCO
3. Dimova Anastasiia, Department of international cooperation, culture and marketing of the Odesa City Council
4. Shyltsyna Svitlana, National research restoration centre of Ukraine, Director of Odesa Branch
5. Poliakov Illia, National research restoration centre of Ukraine in Odesa, Head of the restoration department of Odesa Branch
6. Zakharov Artem, Deputy Director of the Department of Municipal Economy of the Odesa City Council
7. Shvets Oleg, Director of the State Enterprise Housing Management Company «Renaissance-92»
8. Saichuk Oleksandr, Acting Director of Municipal Enterprise «Housing and Communal Services «Porto-Frankivsk»
9. Belyaev Serhiy, Deputy Minister of Culture and Strategic Communications of Ukraine (Ukrainian architect)
10. Liptuga Ivan, Director of the Department of International Relations, Culture and Marketing of Odesa City Council
11. Stoyanov Fedir, Deputy Director of the Department - Head of the Office for UNESCO and Cultural Heritage Protection of the Department of International Relations, Culture and Marketing of Odesa City Council
12. Melnik Olha, Department of Culture, International Cooperation and Marketing of the Odesa City Council, Office for UNESCO
13. Svitlyehna Anastasiia, Student, International Humanitarian University
14. Voronova Anna, Student, International Humanitarian University

**Site visit to the Transfiguration Cathedral, 16:00-16:30h**

People met: Vdodovych Myroslav, Assistant to the Rector of the Transfiguration Cathedral (Father Myroslav)

Participants:

- Stoyanov Fedir, Deputy Director of the Department - Head of the Office for UNESCO and Cultural Heritage Protection of the Department of International Relations, Culture and Marketing of Odesa City Council
- Belyaev Serhiy, Deputy Minister of Culture and Strategic Communications of Ukraine (Ukrainian architect)
- Svitlyehna Anastasiia, Student, International Humanitarian University (*interpretation*)
- Voronova Anna, Student, International Humanitarian University (*interpretation*)

**Site visit of the proposed buffer zone of the property, 16.30-18.00h**

**Day 4: Friday, 14 February 2025**

**Working session 1: Session on international assistance, at the Fine Arts Museum, 10-11:30h**

1. Kulai Kateryna, Acting Director of the Odesa National Art Museum
2. Dyakova Darya, Director of the NGO "Museum for Change", Head of the Community Development Department of the Odesa National Art Museum
3. Belyaev Serhiy, Deputy Minister of Culture and Strategic Communications of Ukraine (Ukrainian architect)
4. Stoyanov Fedir, Deputy Director of the Department - Head of the Office for UNESCO and Cultural Heritage Protection of the Department of International Relations, Culture and Marketing of Odesa City Council
5. Melnik Olha, Department of International Relations, Culture and Marketing, Office for UNESCO
6. Knyha Yelyzaveta, Manager at the Museum for Change and Lawyer at Odesa National Art Museum
7. Svitlyehna Anastasiia, Student, International Humanitarian University (*provided translations*)
8. Voronova Anna, Student, International Humanitarian University (*provided translations*)

**Working session 2: Session with partners (Union of Architects, Academy, etc.) in the City Council, 11:30-13:30h**

1. Liptuga Ivan, Director of the Department of International Relations, Culture and Marketing of Odesa City Council
2. Stoyanov Fedir, Deputy Director of the Department - Head of the Office for UNESCO and Cultural Heritage Protection of the Department of International Relations, Culture and Marketing of Odesa City Council
3. Kasimov Marat, Acting Director of the Department of Architecture and Urban Development of Odesa City Council - Chief Architect of the city
4. Kovrov Anatolii, Rector of Odesa State Academy of Civil Engineering and Architecture, Professor
5. Surovaia L., Union of Architects, Master Plan Specialist
6. Myronenko V., Union of Architects, Deputy Head, Union of Architects
7. Matiushenko M., Union of Architects, Head of Union of Architects, Branch in Odesa
8. Hrekov O., Union of Architects, Department of Architecture and Urban Planning of Odesa City Council, Head of the Cadastre Department
9. Chepeliev M., Union of Architects, Odesa State Academy of Civil Engineering and Architecture Researcher
10. Pishchev D., Union of Architects, Odesa State Academy of Civil Engineering and Architecture, Researcher, Professor
11. Matiushenko A., Union of Architects, Reconstruction and Restoration Specialist
12. Bazan M., Union of Architects, Former Chief Architect of the City
13. Kazany H., Union of Architects, Architect Restorer
14. Murina Svetlana, Municipal enterprise Odesaproject at Odesa City Council, Head

**Working session 3: Debriefing with City Council and Regional Administration, 15.30-18.00h**

1. Liptuga Ivan, Director of the Department of International Relations, Culture and Marketing of Odesa City Council
2. Stoyanov Fedir, Deputy Director of the Department - Head of the Office for UNESCO and Cultural Heritage Protection of the Department of International Relations, Culture and Marketing of Odesa City Council
3. Vorobyova Olena, Deputy Director of the Department - Head of the Office for the Protection of Cultural Heritage Objects of the Department of Culture, Nationalities, Religions and Protection of Cultural Heritage Objects of the Odesa Regional State Administration

## **Annex D      List of people met**

State Party participants throughout the mission included:

### **Odesa City Council:**

1. Mulliani Attilio, Head of the Office of Restoration and Urbanism under the Mayor of Odesa, Advisor to the Mayor on International Cooperation, Ambassador of Odesa to the Italian Republic
2. Dimova Anastasiia, Department of international cooperation, culture and marketing of the Odesa City Council
3. Hrekov O., Union of Architects, Department of Architecture and Urban Planning of Odesa City Council, Head of the Cadastre Department
4. Kasimov Marat, Acting Director, Department of Architecture and Urban Development of Odesa City Council - Chief Architect of the city
5. Kovalchuk Lidiia, Department of international cooperation, culture and marketing of the Odesa City Council, Head of UNESCO division, Office for UNESCO and cultural heritage protection
6. Liptuga Ivan, Director, Department of International Relations, Culture and Marketing of Odesa City Council
7. Melnik Olha, Department of International Relations, Culture and Marketing of Odesa City Council, Office for UNESCO
8. Murina Svetlana, Municipal enterprise Odesa project at Odesa City Council, Head
9. Polishchuk Nina Anatoliivna, Head of the Land Management Department, Department of Land Resources of Odesa City Council
10. Rymak Nataliia, Department of international cooperation, culture and marketing of the Odesa City Council, Division of UNESCO
11. Samokysh Inna Vasyliivna, Head of the Legal Department, Department of Land Resources of Odesa City Council
12. Stoyanov Fedir, Deputy Director, Department - Head of management, Department for UNESCO and the Protection of Cultural Heritage of the Department of International Relations, Culture and Marketing of Odesa City Council
13. Filatov Oleksandr, First Deputy Mayor of the city
14. Trukhanov Gennadiy, Mayor of Odesa

### **Ministry of Culture and Strategic Communications:**

15. Belyaev Serhiy, Deputy Minister, Culture and Strategic Communications of Ukraine (Ukrainian architect)
16. Pylypenko Volodymyr, Advisor to the Minister of Culture and Strategic Communications of Ukraine on International Law

### **Ministry of Foreign Affairs:**

17. Sukhomylo Petro, Representative of the Ukrainian Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Odesa

### **Regional State Administration:**

18. Kiper Oleh, Head of the Odesa Regional State (Military) Administration
19. Oliynyk Olena, Director of the Department of Culture, Nationalities, Religions and Protection of Cultural Heritage Objects of the Odesa Regional Military Administration
20. Shalyhailo Anton, Deputy Head of the Odesa Regional State (Military) Administration
21. Vorobyova Olena, Deputy Director of the Department - Head of the Office for the Protection of Cultural Heritage Objects of the Department of Culture, Nationalities, Religions and Protection of Cultural Heritage Objects of the Odesa Regional State Administration

### **Institutes:**

22. Chepeliev M., Union of Architects, Odesa State Academy of Civil Engineering and Architecture Researcher

23. Kovrov Anatolii, Rector of Odesa State Academy of Civil Engineering and Architecture, Professor
24. Poliakov Illia, National research restoration centre of Ukraine in Odesa, Head of the restoration department of Odesa Branch
25. Pishchev D., Union of Architects, Odesa State Academy of Civil Engineering and Architecture, Researcher, Professor
26. Shyltsyna Svitlana, National research restoration centre of Ukraine, Director of Odesa Branch
27. Sukhanov Volodymyr, Director of the Construction and Technology Institute of the Odesa State Academy of Civil Engineering and Architecture, Scientific Director of the Research and Production Centre «ECOBUD»
28. Vdodovych Myroslav, Assistant to the Rector of the Transfiguration Cathedral (Father Myroslav)

#### **Museum and cultural institutions representatives:**

29. Babich Nadiia, Director, Odesa National Academic Opera and Ballet Theatre
30. Biriukova Iryna, Director General, Odesa National Scientific Library
31. Dyakova Darya, Director, NGO "Museum for Change", Head of the Community Development Department of the Odesa National Art Museum
32. Iergeeva Kateryna, Odesa Literary Museum
33. Kulai Kateryna, Acting Director, Odesa National Art Museum
34. Zhekova Svitlana, Director, House of Scientists
35. Khil Olena, Acting Rector, A. Nezhdanova Odesa National Music Academy
36. Liptuga Tetiana, Director, Odesa Literary Museum
37. Miulberg Sergiy, First Deputy Managing Director, Odesa National Academic Theatre of Opera and Ballet
38. Moldovanov Viktor, Director, Odesa State Music Lyceum named after Professor P.S. Stolyarsky
39. Poronyk Ihor, Director, Museum of Western and Eastern Art (Abaza Palace)
40. Pistruil Ihor, Director, Odesa Archaeological Museum of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine
41. Pyvovarova Yulia, Director, Vasyl Vasylko, Artistic Director, Odesa Academic Ukrainian Music and Drama Theatre
42. Zitser Halyna, Director, Odesa Regional Philharmonic named after David Oistrakh

#### **Odesa Seaport Authority:**

43. Bakhchivanzhy Volodymyr, Deputy Head of the Odesa Branch of USPA for Operations
44. Goncharova Zhanna, Leading Engineer of the Property and Contractual Work Department
45. Kalyuzhnyi Oleksiy, Deputy Head of the Odesa Branch of USPA for Port Infrastructure Development
46. Pavilianiti-Karpov Denys, Head of the Odesa Branch of USPA
47. Shalginskikh Iryna, Head of the Legal Service of the Odesa Branch of SE "USPA"

#### **Union of Architects:**

48. Bazan M., Union of Architects, Former Chief Architect of the City
49. Kazany H., Union of Architects, Architect Restorer
50. Matiushenko A., Union of Architects, Reconstruction and Restoration Specialist
51. Matiushenko M., Union of Architects, Head of Union of Architects, Branch in Odesa
52. Myronenko V., Union of Architects, Deputy Head, Union of Architects
53. Surovaia L., Union of Architects, Master Plan Specialist

#### **Other participants:**

54. Knyha Yelyzaveta, Manager at the Museum for Change and Lawyer at Odesa National Art Museum



55. Kolesan Oksana, Director, kindergarten № 50
56. Pietro Pippi, Head, Office of the Agency for Development Cooperation of the Italian Republic (AICS)
57. Saichuk Oleksandr, Acting Director, Municipal Enterprise «Housing and Communal Services «Porto-Frankivsk»
58. Shterbul Natalia, Full member of the Ukrainian National Committee of the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS)
59. Shvets Oleg, Director, State Enterprise Housing Management Company «Renaissance-92»
60. Svitlyehna Anastasiia, Student, International Humanitarian University (provided translations)
61. Voronova Anna, Student, International Humanitarian University (provided translations)

## **Annex E      Statement of Outstanding    Universal Value**

*Adopted in 2023 by Decision 18 EXT.COM 5.2.*

### **Brief synthesis**

The historic centre of Odesa is part of a port city located on the Ukrainian shores of the Black Sea. It stands on a shallow indentation of the seacoast about thirty kilometres north of the Dniester River estuary. The city was founded in 1794 by a strategic decision of the Empress Catherine II to build a warm-water port following the conclusion of the Russo-Turkish war of 1787-1792.

The new city, built on the site of a Turkish fortress, was initially planned by a military engineer and then expanded further during the 19th century.

Odesa owes its character and rapid development during the 19th century to the success of its port, the favourable policies of its governors, and its status as a free port city from 1819 to 1859. Trade attracted many diverse people who formed multi-ethnic and multicultural communities, making Odesa a cosmopolitan city. Its pace of development, the wealth it generated and its multiculturalism all influenced its architectural expression and the variety of styles that still remain in the urban landscape. It has also caused tensions that, beginning in 1821, triggered a series of violent events.

The historic centre of Odesa is a grid system of spacious tree-lined streets divided into two rectangular blocks, the direction of which conformed to the orientation of two deep ravines cutting through the Odesa high plateau perpendicular to the sea. The city is characterised by relatively low-rise buildings. Designed by renowned architects and engineers, many from Italy in the early years, its theatres, religious buildings, schools, private palaces and tenement houses, clubs, hotels, banks, shopping centres, warehouses, stock exchanges, terminals and other public and administrative buildings represent both eclectic diversity in architectural styles and all the main activities of a trading city.

Prymorsky Boulevard, stretching along the edge of the plateau, Prymorsky Stairs coming down to the shore, and the ensemble of the Odesa Opera and Ballet Theatre, and the Palais-Royal are the main landmarks of the city.

While the urban planning and architectural quality represented in Odesa can also be found in other cities in the former Russian and Austro-Hungarian Empires, Odesa has preserved large areas of its historic fabric that reflect its rapid and prosperous development in the 19th century and its population which was far more diverse than in many other cities. Thus, Odesa, through its urban planning and built heritage as a reflection of many cultures, values, customs, social structures, and denominations, can be considered to stand out as a testimony to multicultural and multi-ethnic traditions of Eastern European cities of the 19th century.

**Criterion (ii):** The historic centre of Odesa represents an important interchange of human values within Eastern Europe through its heterogeneous architectural styles, developed during its rapid growth in the 19th century, that reflect the coexistence of many cultures and the combination of influences characteristic of the border area of Europe and Asia.

**Criterion (iv):** The historic centre of Odesa is an outstanding “time capsule” of the 19th-century urban planning, with heterogeneous buildings mostly from the second half of the 19th century and the early 20th century, which reflects both the exceptionally fast growth of the town, based on the prosperity generated by the Industrial Revolution, and its notable diversity.

### **Integrity**

While the designed plan of Odesa evolved in certain respects as the city grew, its main outline remained unchanged. The grid structure and the linear connection with the port and the sea are retained and legible in the cityscape, and many of 19th-century buildings have survived. The modified boundaries matching those of the Integrated Protection Zone of the current

General Plan of Odesa encompass all the necessary attributes expressing the Outstanding Universal Value.

The intactness of the city's 19th- and early 20th-century architecture, seems to be mainly satisfactory for the key buildings, but remains highly vulnerable due to the lack of adequate planning controls and inappropriate conservation. The integrity of the form and characteristics of the building quarters behind the main street facades, also appears highly vulnerable to modern infill and inadequate conservation. Given the emergency procedure and the lack of a mission to the site, at the moment of inscription an appropriate assessment of how well the integrity of individual buildings and group of buildings has been maintained is to be envisaged.

### **Authenticity**

The key attributes of Outstanding Universal Value relate to the planned layout of the city, and its heterogeneous architecture that reflects the diversity of its multicultural trading communities. The modified boundaries matching those of the Integrated Protection Zone of the current General Plan of Odesa, encompass all the necessary attributes that convey the idea of a coherent city, developed rapidly during a period of exceptional economic growth and with buildings that reflect fully the intertwined social, cultural and architectural influences that prevailed.

Given the emergency procedure and the lack of a mission to the site, at the moment of inscription an appropriate assessment of the authenticity of individual buildings, their state of conservation, how their contexts have been respected, and how the new buildings developed during the last twenty years have impacted adversely on the overall authenticity of the urban ensemble is to be envisaged.

### **Management and protection requirements**

General provisions for cultural heritage protection are established by the Law of Ukraine on Cultural Heritage Protection adopted in 2000. The Ministry of Culture and Information Policy of Ukraine is the highest authority in the sphere of cultural heritage, acting on behalf of the Cabinet of Ministers. It formulates and implements state policy on cultural heritage and directs the activities of state institutions related to culture and art. The Ministry is responsible for supervising and monitoring the protection of historic monuments. At the municipal level, the Department of Cultural Heritage Protection of the Odesa City Council is responsible for the protection and conservation of cultural heritage sites in compliance with regulations on historic conservation in urban planning.

The property is protected according to the local regulations established in 2008 by the General Plan of Odesa.

The property is situated in the central zone, the most significant one in the city, where the main administrative, public, business, and cultural institutions are located. An Integrated Protection Zone was established. Its boundaries are delineated according to the current Historical and Architectural Reference Plan of Odesa, approved by the Order of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism of Ukraine and integrated into the General Plan of Odesa. Selected individual buildings and their complexes are listed in the State Register of Immovable Historical Monuments of Ukraine and protected in compliance with the Law of Ukraine on Cultural Heritage Protection as historic architectural monuments.

The enhancement of the management system is needed to cover all attributes and provide for coordinated management with supporting administrative tools and decision-making mechanisms. The management system should include detailed monitoring and conservation programmes, and an overall interpretation and presentation policy. Risk management should be included.

## **Annex F Documents provided**

### **Submitted before the mission:**

- List of monuments and objects of cultural heritage in Odesa
- Historical and architectural technical plan of Odesa (2007)
- Zoning plan for the city of Odesa 2016
- **EU4Culture project outcomes:**
  - A guide to arranging beautiful Odesa signs
  - Reference book to preserve the cultural the heritage of Odesa
  - Cultural development strategy of Odesa 2025-2035
- **Legal documents:**
  - Law of Ukraine “On the protection of cultural heritage” (2000)
  - Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine No. 406 (2017)
  - Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine No. 805 on “Some issues of protection and conservation of World Heritage sites” (2019)
  - Decree of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine № 1342 On approval of the Procedure for conducting certain types of works on cultural heritage sites in conditions of martial law, of November 15, 2022 [in Ukrainian and in English]
  - Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine No. 940 “On Amendments to the Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine No. 345 dated 25 February 2015” (2023)
- **Maps:**
  - General Plan of Odesa, 13 June 2013 – Main Table
  - Rules for the protection and use of historical areas (several maps, by area)

### **Submitted after the mission:**

- Reference Plans of Neighbourhoods - Inventory Cards (folder with several documents)
- Programs from 2006 to 2021 (folder with several documents)
- Post-inscription measures for properties listed on the UNESCO World Heritage List
- Resolution No. 1342 – Table of Requirements for Different Types of Work [in Ukrainian and English]
- List of Major Programmes for the Preservation of Odesa’s Historic Buildings, with Information on Programme Implementation in 2006–2010 and 2013–2021 [in Ukrainian]
- List of cultural heritage monuments damaged since the full-scale invasion by the Russian Federation as of 14 February 2025 (2022-2025) [in Ukrainian]
- *2024 Key Policy Issues: Immovable Cultural Heritage* – Prepared as Part of the RES-POL Project with Support from the European Union, 2024 [in Ukrainian]
- Analysis of problems in legal regulations concerning the preservation and management of cultural and natural heritage in Ukraine, 2018 [in Ukrainian]
- **House of Scientists:**
  - Act of Technical Inspection of a Cultural Heritage Site Damaged by Armed Aggression – House of Scientists, Odesa (2023)
  - Report on the results of technical inspection of the building structures of the building “House of Scientists” (2023)
  - Technical Passport – House of Scientists (Odesa)
- **Restoration project documentation:**
  - Composition and Content of Scientific and Design Documentation for the Restoration of Architectural and Urban Planning Monuments – DBN A.2.2-14:2016; State Building Standards of Ukraine, 2022 [in Ukrainian]
  - Composition and Content of the Historical and Architectural Reference Plan for a Settlement – DBN B.2.2-3:2021; State Building Standards of Ukraine, 2022 [in Ukrainian]



- Composition and Content of Scientific and Design Documentation for the Restoration of Architectural and Urban Planning Monuments – DBN A.2.2-14:2016 (with Amendment No. 1); State Building Standards of Ukraine, 2022 [in Ukrainian]
- Composition and Content of Scientific and Design Documentation for Defining the Boundaries and Usage Regimes of Architectural and Urban Planning Conservation Areas – DSTU B B.2.2-10:2016; State Building Standards of Ukraine, 2017 [in Ukrainian]
- Instructions for Carrying Out Repair and Restoration Works on Architectural and Urban Planning Monuments – DSTU-N B V.3.2-4:2016; State Building Standards of Ukraine, 2016 [in Ukrainian]
- **Historical and Architectural Reference Plan, Conservation Zone Project, and Definition of the Boundaries of Historical Areas of Odesa – Approved by Order of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism of Ukraine No. 728/0/16-08, Dated 20 June 2008** [in Ukrainian]:
  - Book 1, textual part (172 pages)
  - Book 4, part 2, photos (271 pages)
  - Book 4, part 2-1, photos (271 pages)
  - Book 4, part 2-4, photos (275 pages)
  - Book 4, part 3, photos (37 pages)
- **Presentations:**
  - Joint WHC/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring Mission
  - The need for scientific and technical inventory of the historical centre building
  - Protection of cultural heritage of Odesa
  - Growth of the territory of the city of Odesa
  - Block of buildings located on Sofiivska Street
  - Block of buildings located on the Hrechenska, Rishelievskaya, Istrianska, and N. Strokatoyi (Bunina) Streets
- **Legal Documents:**
  - Heritage Protection Agreement (18 March 2024)
  - Guidelines for carrying out repair and restoration works on architectural and urban monuments (2016)
- **Maps:**
  - Maps from the port: proposals for buffer zone change
  - Map showing damaged buildings between 20 July 2023 and 31 January 2025 within the World Heritage property
  - Different maps of Odesa

## **Annex G      Legal Framework and Management**

### **Primary Laws:**

1. Law on Local Self-Government (Bulletin of the Supreme Council of Ukraine, 1997, No. 24, art. 170, with amendments from 2024)
2. Law on the Protection of Cultural Heritage (Bulletin of the Supreme Council of Ukraine, 2000, No. 39, p. 333, with amendments as of 2021)
3. Land Code Bulletin of the Supreme Council of Ukraine, 2002, Nos. 3-4, art. 27, with amendments from 2021)
4. Civil Code (Bulletin of the Supreme Council of Ukraine, 2003, Nos. 40-44, art. 356, with amendments from 2024)
5. Law on Culture (Official Journal of the Supreme Council of Ukraine, 2011, No. 24, art. 168, with amendments from 2024)
6. Law on the Regulation of Urban Development (Bulletin of the Supreme Council of Ukraine, 2011, No. 34, p. 343, with amendments as of 2025)
7. Law on Condemnation of the Communist and National Socialist (Nazi) Totalitarian Regimes in Ukraine and Prohibition of Propaganda of Their Symbols (Bulletin of the Supreme Council of Ukraine, 2015, No. 26, art. 219, with amendments from 2023)
8. Law on Environmental Impact Assessment (Official Bulletin of the Supreme Council of Ukraine, 2017, No. 29, art. 315, with amendments as of 2024)
9. Law on Condemnation and Prohibition of Propaganda of Russian Imperial Policy in Ukraine and Decolonisation of Place Names (Bulletin of the Supreme Council of Ukraine 2023, No. 65, art. 221, with amendments from 2023)

### **Presidential and Ministerial Acts:**

10. Decree No. 885/2019 of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine on the Regulation on the Ministry of Culture of Ukraine (now: Ministry of Culture and Strategic Communications - MCSC) (2019)
11. Resolution No 406 of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine (2017)
12. Resolution No. 805 of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine (2019)
13. Resolution No. 940 of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine "On Amendments to the Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine No. 345 dated 25 February 2015" (2023)

### **Regulations and Standards:**

14. Guidelines for carrying out repair and restoration works on architectural and urban monuments (2016)
15. Composition and content of scientific and project documentation for restoration of architectural and urban monuments (2016, with subsequent amendments)
16. Special procedure for carrying out certain types of work on cultural heritage objects under martial law Cabinet of Ministers Resolution No. 1342 (2022)
17. State Building Standards of Ukraine

### **Other:**

18. Heritage Protection Agreement (18 March 2024)

## Annex H Relevant World Heritage Committee Decisions

### Decision 46 COM 7A.6

The Historic Centre of Odesa (Ukraine) (C 1703)

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined Document WHC/24/46.COM/7A.Add,
2. Recalling Decision **18 EXT.COM 5.2** adopted at its 18th extraordinary session (UNESCO, 2023),
3. Deplores the Russian Federation's full-scale invasion of Ukraine and the loss of human life and expresses its utmost concern at the increasing ascertained and potential threats facing the property;
4. Appreciates the commitment of the State Party to the protection of the World Heritage property 'The Historic Centre of Odesa', in particular through the various protective measures taken, including the documentation, stabilisation, repair and restoration work of damaged cultural heritage buildings, and invites the State Party to continue to take all possible measures to protect the property and, in general, its cultural and natural heritage threatened by the war, in particular its World Heritage properties, including their buffer zones and wider settings, as well as the sites included in the Tentative List;
5. Calls on the Russian Federation to refrain from any action that would cause direct or indirect damage to the property and its buffer zone and wider setting, as well as to cultural heritage in Ukraine overall, in particular to its World Heritage properties and their buffer zones and wider settings, as well as sites included on the Tentative List of Ukraine, and to fulfil its obligations under international law, including Article 6 of the World Heritage Convention;
6. Welcomes the progress made by the State Party in the implementation of the Committee's previous decision, despite the difficult circumstances, and requests the State Party to continue to implement the remaining recommendations with due diligence, as permitted by the current circumstances, and to take full advantage of the ongoing assistance provided by UNESCO and the Advisory Bodies, including under the World Heritage Fund;
7. Takes note of the submission by the State Party of the map of the property, as requested by the Committee in its previous decision, and considers this to be consistent with the boundaries of the property as inscribed;
8. Reiterates its recommendation to the State Party, made in its previous decision, to give urgent consideration to extending the buffer zone of the property and setting out how it will be managed to support the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property, and further invites the State Party to submit, as soon as possible, a minor boundary modification reflecting the extended buffer zone;
9. Reiterates its call on the international community to continue to support the safeguarding of Ukraine's cultural and natural heritage, and further calls on the international community to ensure, where applicable, that its support is implemented in full compliance with the provisions of the World Heritage Convention and its Operational Guidelines, and to cooperate in the fight against illicit trafficking of cultural property from Ukraine;
10. Reiterates its concern that the risk preparedness measures for the property are not yet sufficient in terms of analysis of potential impacts of missile strikes on the building fabric and measures to address these impacts, and strongly encourages the State Party to give high priority to the development and urgent implementation of an emergency

preparedness and risk mitigation plan, taking full advantage of the support that UNESCO and the Advisory Bodies can provide thanks to the support of the Government of Japan;

11. Notes with appreciation the invitation by the State Party for a joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission to the property and expresses its regret that this mission could not take place due to the ongoing security situation;
12. Also notes with appreciation the project 'Support for the Implementation of the Odesa Cultural Development Strategy' and requests that its outcomes be submitted to the World Heritage Centre;
13. Further notes with appreciation the granting of provisional enhanced protection under the Second Protocol of the 1954 Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict to three buildings in the property, and encourages the State Party to seek enhanced protection under the Second Protocol for other significant cultural heritage buildings in the property;
14. Reminds the State Party that major restorations or new constructions which may affect the OUV of the property should be notified to the World Heritage Centre as soon as possible and before making any decisions that would be difficult to reverse and that Heritage Impact Assessments of such projects should be undertaken following the methodology of the Guidance and Toolkit for Impact Assessments in a World Heritage Context, in accordance with paragraphs 172 and 118bis of the Operational Guidelines respectively;
15. Also reiterates its request to the State Party to ensure that the adopted and planned legislative amendments do not have a negative impact on the fulfilment of its obligations under the World Heritage Convention, and to submit them to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies before they are enacted, and invites the State Party to take full advantage of the assistance to be provided by UNESCO, at the request of the Ministry of Culture and Information Policy, and thanks to the support of the Government of Japan, to improve the regulatory framework for cultural heritage in Ukraine;
16. Further reiterates its request to the State Party to prepare, in consultation with the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies, a proposal for the Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR) and a set of corrective measures along with a timeframe for their implementation, for adoption by the Committee at its 47th session, while noting that this process may be hampered by the ongoing war and its unforeseeable consequences;
17. Finally requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 February 2025** an updated report on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the above, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 47th session;
18. **Decides to retain The Historic Centre of Odesa (Ukraine) on the List of World Heritage in Danger.**



## Decision 18 EXT.COM 5.2

Any other matter: Nominations to the World Heritage List - Nominations to be processed on an emergency basis – Ukraine

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined Documents WHC/23/18.EXT.COM/5 and WHC/23/18.EXT.COM/INF.5,
2. Inscribes the **Historic Centre of the Port City of Odesa, Ukraine**, on the World Heritage List according to the emergency procedure, on the basis of **criteria (ii) and (iv)**;
3. Adopts the following Statement of Outstanding Universal Value:

### **Brief synthesis**

The historic centre of Odesa is part of a port city located on the Ukrainian shores of the Black Sea. It stands on a shallow indentation of the seacoast about thirty kilometres north of the Dniester River estuary. The city was founded in 1794 by a strategic decision of the Empress Catherine II to build a warm-water port following the conclusion of the Russo-Turkish war of 1787-1792.

The new city, built on the site of a Turkish fortress, was initially planned by a military engineer and then expanded further during the 19th century.

Odesa owes its character and rapid development during the 19th century to the success of its port, the favourable policies of its governors, and its status as a free port city from 1819 to 1859. Trade attracted many diverse people who formed multi-ethnic and multicultural communities, making Odesa a cosmopolitan city. Its pace of development, the wealth it generated and its multiculturalism all influenced its architectural expression and the variety of styles that still remain in the urban landscape. It has also caused tensions that, beginning in 1821, triggered a series of violent events.

The historic centre of Odesa is a grid system of spacious tree-lined streets divided into two rectangular blocks, the direction of which conformed to the orientation of two deep ravines cutting through the Odesa high plateau perpendicular to the sea. The city is characterised by relatively low-rise buildings. Designed by renowned architects and engineers, many from Italy in the early years, its theatres, religious buildings, schools, private palaces and tenement houses, clubs, hotels, banks, shopping centres, warehouses, stock exchanges, terminals and other public and administrative buildings represent both eclectic diversity in architectural styles and all the main activities of a trading city.

Prymorsky Boulevard, stretching along the edge of the plateau, Prymorsky Stairs coming down to the shore, and the ensemble of the Odesa Opera and Ballet Theatre, and the Palais-Royal are the main landmarks of the city.

While the urban planning and architectural quality represented in Odesa can also be found in other cities in the former Russian and Austro-Hungarian Empires, Odesa has preserved large areas of its historic fabric that reflect its rapid and prosperous development in the 19th century and its population which was far more diverse than in many other cities. Thus, Odesa, through its urban planning and built heritage as a reflection of many cultures, values, customs, social structures, and denominations, can be considered to stand out as a testimony to multicultural and multi-ethnic traditions of Eastern European cities of the 19th century.

**Criterion (ii):** The historic centre of Odesa represents an important interchange of human values within Eastern Europe through its heterogeneous architectural styles, developed during its rapid growth in the 19th century, that reflect the coexistence of

many cultures and the combination of influences characteristic of the border area of Europe and Asia.

**Criterion (iv):** The historic centre of Odesa is an outstanding “time capsule” of the 19th century urban planning, with heterogeneous buildings mostly from the second half of the 19th century and the early 20th century, which reflects both the exceptionally fast growth of the town, based on the prosperity generated by the Industrial Revolution, and its notable diversity.

### **Integrity**

While the designed plan of Odesa evolved in certain respects as the city grew, its main outline remained unchanged. The grid structure and the linear connection with the port and the sea are retained and legible in the cityscape, and many of 19th-century buildings have survived. The modified boundaries matching those of the Integrated Protection Zone of the current General Plan of Odesa encompass all the necessary attributes expressing the Outstanding Universal Value.

The intactness of the city’s 19th- and early 20th century architecture, seems to be mainly satisfactory for the key buildings, but remains highly vulnerable due to the lack of adequate planning controls and inappropriate conservation. The integrity of the form and characteristics of the building quarters behind the main street facades, also appears highly vulnerable to modern infill and inadequate conservation. Given the emergency procedure and the lack of a mission to the site, at the moment of inscription an appropriate assessment of how well the integrity of individual buildings and group of buildings has been maintained is to be envisaged.

### **Authenticity**

The key attributes of Outstanding Universal Value relate to the planned layout of the city, and its heterogeneous architecture that reflects the diversity of its multicultural trading communities. The modified boundaries matching those of the Integrated Protection Zone of the current General Plan of Odesa, encompass all the necessary attributes that convey the idea of a coherent city, developed rapidly during a period of exceptional economic growth and with buildings that reflect fully the intertwined social, cultural and architectural influences that prevailed.

Given the emergency procedure and the lack of a mission to the site, at the moment of inscription an appropriate assessment of the authenticity of individual buildings, their state of conservation, how their contexts have been respected, and how the new buildings developed during the last twenty years have impacted adversely on the overall authenticity of the urban ensemble is to be envisaged.

### **Management and protection requirements**

General provisions for cultural heritage protection are established by the Law of Ukraine on Cultural Heritage Protection adopted in 2000. The Ministry of Culture and Information Policy of Ukraine is the highest authority in the sphere of cultural heritage, acting on behalf of the Cabinet of Ministers. It formulates and implements state policy on cultural heritage and directs the activities of state institutions related to culture and art. The Ministry is responsible for supervising and monitoring the protection of historic monuments. At the municipal level, the Department of Cultural Heritage Protection of the Odesa City Council is responsible for the protection and conservation of cultural heritage sites in compliance with regulations on historic conservation in urban planning.

The property is protected according to the local regulations established in 2008 by the General Plan of Odesa.

The property is situated in the central zone, the most significant one in the city, where the main administrative, public, business, and cultural institutions are located. An Integrated Protection Zone was established. Its boundaries are delineated according

to the current Historical and Architectural Reference Plan of Odesa, approved by the Order of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism of Ukraine and integrated into the General Plan of Odesa. Selected individual buildings and their complexes are listed in the State Register of Immovable Historical Monuments of Ukraine and protected in compliance with the Law of Ukraine on Cultural Heritage Protection as historic architectural monuments.

The enhancement of the management system is needed to cover all attributes and provide for coordinated management with supporting administrative tools and decision-making mechanisms. The management system should include detailed monitoring and conservation programmes, and an overall interpretation and presentation policy. Risk management should be included.

4. Also inscribes the **Historic Centre of the Port City of Odesa, Ukraine**, on the List of World Heritage in Danger;
5. Recommends that the State Party invite a joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission to the property, if this is feasible, to establish a Desired state of conservation and a programme of corrective measures for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger;
6. Requests the State Party to submit a map and geographical coordinates showing the modified boundaries of the property, with wider boundaries than those proposed in the nomination dossier and excluding the port area, covering the historic area of the city, as it was developed by the end of the 19th century and coinciding with those of the Integrated Protection Zone as shown in the General Plan of Odesa, with the port area as a part of the buffer zone, by 1 June 2023;
7. Also recommends that the State Party give urgent consideration to the following:
  - a) Extending the buffer zone to encompass the immediate setting of the modified boundaries as well as the port area, and submit a minor boundary modification request in this respect with details of how the buffer zone will be managed to support the Outstanding Universal Value of the property,
  - b) Reinforcing the legal regulation for the Integrated Protection Zone to protect the attributes of the property against unsuitable development,
  - c) Integrating Heritage Impact Assessment mechanisms into the legal framework as a pre-requisite for development projects and activities that are planned for implementation within the property or its buffer zone,
  - d) Developing an inventory and indicators for the assessment of the state of conservation of the property together with developing and implementing a monitoring system,
  - e) Continuing the implementation of conservation programmes with priorities given to buildings at risk and areas that need urgent stabilisation or conservation interventions,
  - f) Developing a study to identify tangible and intangible aspects of multi-ethnic and multicultural heritage of the city and developing measures for an interpretation policy,
  - g) Revising the draft management plan to include disaster, climate change and other risk preparedness measures, as well as implementation measures for emergency responses;
8. Also requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre by **1 February 2024**, a report on the implementation of the above-mentioned recommendations for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 46th session;

9. Decides that the name of the property be changed to become “**The Historic Centre of Odesa**”.

## **Annex I      List of Acronyms**

AICs: Agency for Development Cooperation

DMS: Disaster Management System

DRM: Disaster Risk Management

DSA: District State Administration

DSOCR: Desired state of conservation for removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger

EIA: Environmental Impact Assessment

EPR: Emergency Preparedness and Response

GIS: Geographic Information System

HIA: Heritage Impact Assessment

HUL: Historic Urban Landscape

ICOMOS: International Council on Monuments and Sites

IDIA: In-Depth Impact Assessment

MCSC: Ministry of Culture and Strategic Communications

OUV: Outstanding Universal Value

RMP: Risk Management Plan

SOC: State of Conservation report

SOUV: Statement of Outstanding Universal Value

SRIM: State Register of Immovable Monuments of Ukraine

UNDRR: United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction