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CLINK: Cultural heritage linking diversities in Europe

Final International event Regenerating heritage: new life for abandoned industrial, religious, military or public buildings

28 May 2020 – 12:00 -14:00

Online conference organised by Local Democracy Agency Mostar

Heritage sites and buildings can have a very positive influence on many aspects of the way a community develops. Regeneration, housing, education, economic growth and community engagement are examples of the ways in which heritage can make a very positive contribution to community life.

Therefore, within project we have conducted a research named „**Research in the communities – mapping cultural heritage sites with potentials for adaptive re-use**“ **Research was done in 9 local communities:** Heraklion (GR); Sisak (CRO); Knjaževac (RS); Subotica (RS); Mostar (BH); Zavidovići (BH); Prijedor (BH); Nikšić (MNE) and Valora (AL)

Methodology of the research was defined and was divided in 3 step tasks:

1st – to identify cultural heritage site in their cities and to give a short discription about the sites;

2nd – to sub-select 3 sites for which they name proposals of adaptive re-use;

3rd step – to express the importance of local community engagement in proposing new concepts for cultural heritage adaptive re-use process.

In the end, mapped were over 30 heritage objects. Among the mapped objects, the most of them belong to the industrial heritage, although objects from other categories of cultural heritage were mapped (medieval fortresses, housing complexes, sacral objects, etc...). The adaptive reuse proposals are in line with the needs of each individual case and needs of the citizens. The common value of all proposals is the fact that proposals for adaptive re-use came from community and as such are the voice of the end users. In several cases it was pointed out that very often the conclusion on adaptive reuse comes from the administration, without public hearings. This attitude towards the process of adaptation is wrong and as such suggests that the building will again be subject to decay and non-use due to its un adapted purpose.





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Based on the above explained research and following facts:

- The historic environment is a proven source of benefit to local economies, particularly through tourism.
- People are very proud of their local history, but don't always express how much they value a place until it's threatened. Because it adds character and distinctiveness to an area, heritage is a fundamental in creating a 'sense of place' for a community.
- Adaptive reuse of heritage buildings is an important factor in creating sustainable communities.
- An attractive heritage environment assists in attracting external investment as well as maintaining existing businesses of all types, not just tourism-related.
- Heritage buildings add value to regeneration projects, both in terms the economic and environmental advantage of reuse over new build and in adding character to a precinct.
- Heritage places can be a potent driver for community action.
- Increased community values and greater social inclusion can be achieved through a focus on heritage matters.
- The heritage places are an excellent local educational resource for people of all ages. Learning about the history of a place is a good way of bringing communities together through a shared understanding of the unique cultural identity heritage places give to an area.
- Areas where the heritage is understood and valued tend to be better looked after than those where heritage items have no link with the community. Such links help to foster civic responsibility and citizenship and contribute to everyone's quality of life.



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We, participants of the CLINK project give a following

STATEMENT

Heritage is a potent driver for community action

Therefore, for the benefit of heritage protection, as well as the general benefit of citizens and their needs, for the purpose of environmental protection and smart urban planning, the process of reuse and adaptation of buildings of cultural heritage, in particular industrial heritage buildings, is one of the key processes for creating a healthy, sustainable and liveable environment.

In order for this to happen, process of decision making upon its final purpose must be agreed between all participants in the process, including citizens.

Therefore, we need responsible approach as follows:

- **To be accountable** - we must accept that every decision and action we make in our daily lives has an impact;
- **To have capacity** - we must take responsibility for our actions and acquire the knowledge skills and resources to make change;
- **To take action** - being responsible is not just an intent. It requires action. And that action must be for good based upon the law our ethics and morals.

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