

HERIWELL

Cultural Heritage as a Source
of Societal Well-being in European Regions



In collaboration with



ESPON HERIWELL FINAL CONFERENCE

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Main policy implications of the HERIWELL project: a synthesis

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A key evidence:

All valorisation strategies analysed by HERIWELL are equally important, as cultural heritage can produce effects transversally on all dimensions of well-being. The selection of one or another strategy depends on the societal well-being effects that policymakers and stakeholders would like to obtain.

Two main drivers:

- **Design of a common framework** for the identification, definition and measurement of cultural heritage and societal well-being.
- **Actions to maximise the potential** of cultural heritage to contribute to societal well-being.

For cultural heritage to produce well-being outcomes, the following key aspects should be considered in designing heritage valorisation strategies.



1. Improve the accessibility and participation in cultural heritage

- **Targeting heritage opportunities and accessibility to categories of people usually marginalised** (e.g. people with disabilities, women, youth, people living in rural and remote areas and in peripheral or neglected neighbourhoods, people with low levels of education or low income), also by decentralising heritage activities in areas close to inhabitants' living and working places or in non-traditional settings (retirement houses, hospitals, peripheral and rural areas, etc.).
- **Promoting digitisation of cultural heritage to increase young people's interest and participation** in cultural heritage, and to allow migrants to engage in their own heritage even if abroad.
- **Improving the aesthetics of heritage buildings and their surroundings**, and supporting reception and services facilities enhancing participation in heritage, also by making heritage alive, turning heritage spaces into meeting places.



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INTANGIBLE

- **Strengthening the dissemination of information on heritage** and opportunities to engage with it, combining various sources of traditional and social media, and creating information offices in decentralised areas.
- **Paying attention to issues relevant for access to heritage**, such as:
 - the transport system;
 - quality of spaces where heritage is located;
 - adequacy of the digital infrastructure and digital skills of heritage staff and citizens (in particular for digital heritage).
- **Contributing to citizens' empowerment, enhancing their sense of belonging, implementing “participative” aspects** such as:
 - active participation of under-represented groups;
 - active involvement of participants from the design phase of the policy agenda;
 - ensuring equality between the leaders of participatory processes and engaged participants.

2. Negotiate the value of the CH

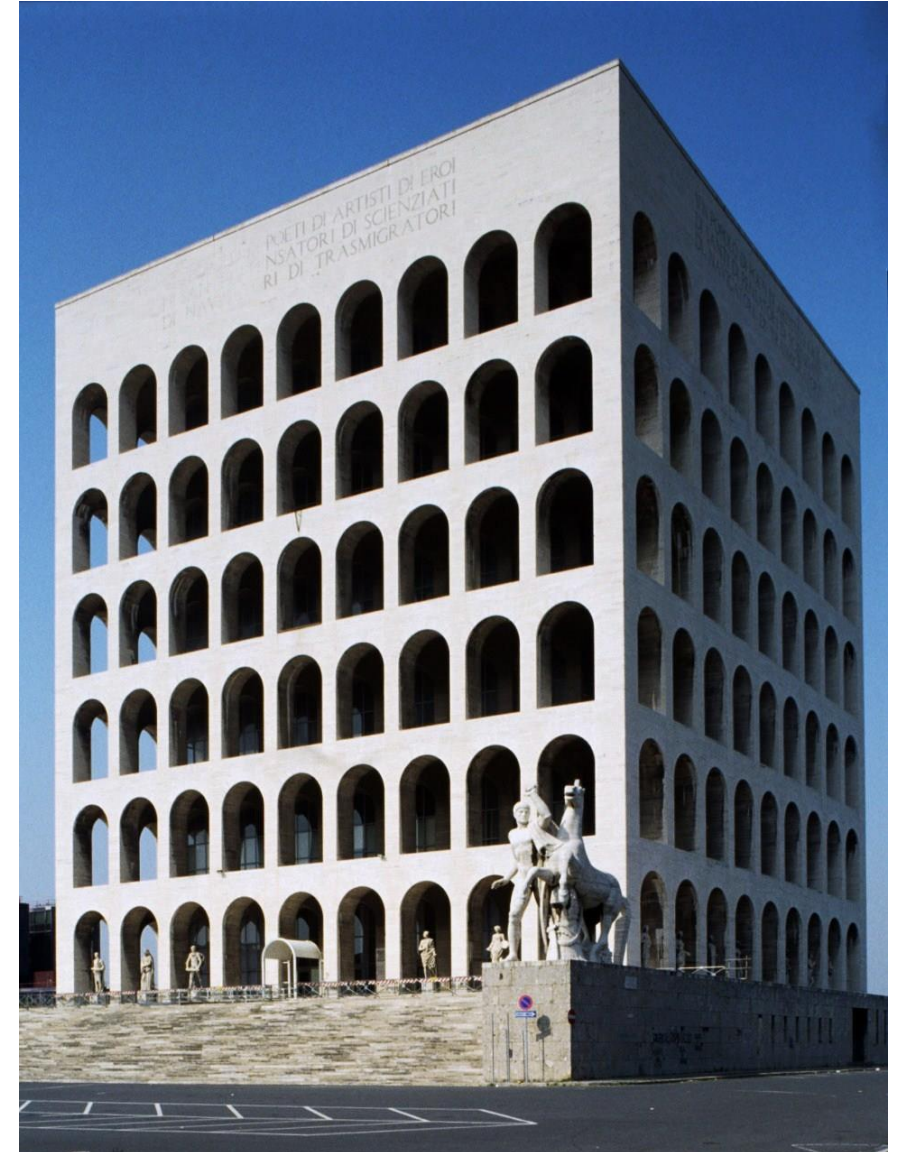
Problems arising from dissonant or contested CH must be negotiated.

A greater awareness on the part of young people of possible negative effects of some forms of cultural heritage, together with a lower consideration of the value of CH by this target group, shows that the value of heritage is not to be taken for granted.

CH can be a space to recompose conflicts and generate social cohesion.

Issues can be settled on the basis of:

- the inclusion of all stakeholders
- preparatory research
- educational efforts
- the willingness of policy makers to promote a mediation and partial restitution process.



3. Ensure systemic data collection and monitoring and evaluation systems

- Elaborate a **common agreed framework** of defining both cultural heritage and societal well-being that can improve their measurement across time and countries
- Define a **common measurement system** able to harmonize and weight the different forms of cultural heritage across countries and to capture all dimensions of societal well-being as well as the impacts of heritage on well-being
- **Improve data collection** on cultural heritage and its impacts on societal well-being; build the capacity of cultural heritage actors at all levels to gather data
- **Test new methodology.** The analysis of big data can be useful for identifying the involvement of audiences in relation to cultural heritage. *TripAdvisor* and *Wikipedia* can be used to provide data and assess impacts
- **Improve empirical analysis** and the evaluation of qualitative information to integrate quantitative data

4. Ensure an effective governance of cultural heritage

- **Mobilize political consensus towards the valorisation of CH and its inclusion into wider frameworks.** Political consensus is essential for ensuring the sustainability of cultural heritage strategies over time from both a content and financial point of view.
- **Mainstream the heritage dimension in all socio-economic and development policies** including territorial planning, training, education and research, regional development, welfare, environmental and mobility policies/strategies.
- For the design of integrated strategies, **the acknowledgement of the societal well-being potential** of CH is necessary at both the institutional and community level.
- **Ensure multilevel and multisectoral governance** of heritage policies.

- To ensure citizens' engagement and support to investments in heritage, **participatory tools and practices have to be promoted and embedded within local communities and in public institutions.**
- These **practices have to be open and inclusive** for all citizens and **their results should be considered in decision-making.** The effectiveness of participatory practices in cultural heritage depends on the capacity of public institutions to steer and implement them. It also depends on the flexibility of regulatory procedures in participatory processes to enhance people's capacity of influencing heritage design and delivery.



5. Ensure adequate financial resources

- **Continuity and equality in access to public funding** is particularly important to ensure adequate resources. This is especially the case for small grassroots organisations that often do not have the capacities to access private market funding or large public funding opportunities.
- **EU-funded investments can prove particularly useful** to this end, and most of the ECoC analysed cases have benefited from ESIF resources, in particular the ERDF.
- **Increasing attention should be paid to the ESF**, which currently contributes limitedly to cultural heritage; it could support capacity building and the development of heritage-related skills and services.
- **A stronger consideration of the heritage dimension could be mainstreamed in other EU funding schemes**, e.g. on digitisation, gender equality, integration of migrants, fighting social exclusion and health.

6. ...and adequate human resources

- **Ensure adequate human resources and skills/capacity** at all levels of heritage stakeholders, starting from public administration: a key issue for implementing innovative, quality and effective cultural heritage strategies.
- Stakeholders' capacity in the cultural heritage and societal well-being fields can be improved through **training, mutual and peer learning, exchanges of experience and good practices** and creation of knowledge platforms.
- Enforce ed explore with further research the **digital challenge**: capacity-building activities need to also pay attention to strengthening the digital skills of cultural heritage and societal well-being actors, and their capacity to collect data on cultural heritage and implement monitoring and evaluation activities.



Thank you

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