

UDC 304.442

**CULTURAL HERITAGE OF A HISTORIC TOWN AS A RESOURCE
IN EUROPEAN DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES****N. DALZHONAK, T. JUMANTAYEVA****Polotsk National Historical and Cultural Museum-Reserve, Belarus**

The study is dedicated to the problems of using cultural heritage as a resource in the historical towns across the European Union. The emphasis is made on the heritage related effects produced in the social, economic, cultural and environmental spheres presenting the main directions of sustainable development strategies.

Over the past twenty to thirty years, cultural heritage has become a key concept in spatial politics, national and local development strategies. With the targeted use of the social, cultural and economic potential of a historical town, its cultural heritage becomes an important resource for sustainable development, and the conservation process itself contributes to socio-cultural development. The non-renewable nature of such a resource, however, imposes a limitation on how to use it.

Heritage as a socioeconomic resource. The economic resource of the cultural heritage is primarily presented by its tourist use. Often, tourism in historical towns, especially in small ones, is considered as one of the main sources of income. When well-organized, tourism can positively affect the state of heritage and contribute to improving the quality of life of the local population. Importance of the value of heritage objects is increasing due to the complexity of financial support for the preservation of historical buildings without functional qualities, when put onto a competitive market. Rational use of heritage sites produces resources for their conservation. However, when the economic function of the heritage prevails, it leads to the loss of other functions of the cultural heritage of the historical town.

Several European programs provide for the use of cultural heritage for the socio-economic development of historical towns. For example, the "Sustainable development of urban historical areas through an active integration within towns" project (SUIT) [9], implemented in 2000-2003, was aimed at bringing the existing historical territories into line with the current socio-economic needs by active incorporation of heritage into new development projects. According to the "Investing in Heritage – A guide to successful Urban Regeneration" project (INHERIT) [7], implemented in 2005-2007, small and large historical cities can make a significant contribution to the socio-economic well-being of their regions. Unleashing the potential of investing in heritage, cities can be restored physically, economically and socially. The project "Integrated Revitalisation of Historic Towns to Promote a Polycentric and Sustainable Development" (Hist.Urban) [6], implemented in 2006-2008, was aimed at supporting well-balanced sustainable revitalization strategies outside the metropolitan areas based on their architectural heritage.

A study by Cultural Heritage Counts for Europe highlighted, above all, the economic effects of the heritage of a historic town [4]. The competitive advantage of historical towns over "unhistorical" ones at the regional level provides a more attractive living environment, a rich informational basis for marketing events, and a greater return on investment for businesses located in heritage sites. The historical nature of the town ensures a return on investment from the tourist use of heritage objects, as well as indirect income from the tourist infrastructure. The impact on the labour market is that of creating jobs connected with the implementation of the heritage-related projects, and this area requires highly qualified personnel, while the uniqueness of the implemented projects becomes the basis for improving employees' professional skills.

A number of case studies of European projects aimed at organizing cultural tourism in historical towns have at the same time revealed contradictions and negative consequences of the development of modern urban policy based on touristic use of heritage. One of the frequently discussed problems is the growth of tourism and the urban economy due to the exploitation of the local community and its culture. At the same time, there is a "sale" of urban space as of a symbolic capital, which threatens urban vitality and identity associated with historical space [1]. A lot of attention is paid to the authenticity of tourist experience framing the concept of commodification [4]. Increasing competition between historical towns is causing an uneven distribution of tourist flows, and in a broad sense, uneven economic development and living standards at the regional level. In a competitive environment, metropolitan regions initially outperform small and medium-sized towns because the former accumulate core values and infrastructure.

To minimize the negative effects at the European Union level, the concept of integrated urban development policy has been developed and implemented. The Leipzig Charter of a Sustainable European Town

History, cultural studies, tourism, sports

defines the policy of integrated urban development as simultaneous and fair consideration of the needs and interests relevant to the development of the town [8].

Heritage as a sociocultural resource. Cultural heritage of the historical city has a significant sociocultural potential and can act as a full-fledged development resource in case of its effective use. Well-organized activities to preserve such a heritage entail sociocultural effects, both positive and negative. An assessment of the impact of conservation activities is becoming relevant for many reasons, including the need to justify the significant costs of maintaining heritage sites. Modern cultural policy considers preservation of heritage as an investment into achieving certain goals, including those of sociocultural nature.

Traditionally, cultural professionals, as well as local authorities, dealt with the issues of defining, managing and preserving the heritage, which ultimately led to the situation when local communities often did not bear responsibility for their own cultural values. To solve this problem, urban heritage protection programs have included obligatory participation of local communities and stakeholders. Recognition of cultural heritage as of public property entails the need to ensure free access to heritage values, as well as common responsibility for preserving them. It is worth noting that today in the countries of the European Union civic participation in one or another form is a natural phenomenon and an indispensable component of any heritage conservation program at all stages of the process. Ongoing research in this region seeks to integrate and optimize procedural interaction between communities and organizations.

The CHCFE study revealed the following sociocultural effects of heritage conservation: intensification of social integration and public participation, improving the quality of education, developing new knowledge and skills, creating a positive image of the place, improving its aesthetic perception, and creating identity. The negative aspects of these effects were also highlighted, such as gentrification, social exclusion, excessive tourist exploitation, use for nationalistic purposes [4].

One of the projects providing public participation in the programs of restoration of historical towns based on their heritage was the COMUS project (Community-Led Urban Strategies in Historic Towns, 2015-2017) [2]. The main objective of the project was to demonstrate how cultural heritage and its regeneration contribute to the economic, social and cultural development in the city. As a result of the project, the involvement and self-organization of local communities for the regeneration of the city ensured the sustainability of strategies for the conservation and use of urban heritage.

Heritage as an environmental resource. Being an integral part of European sustainable development programs, the environmental trend has also been refracted in the field of heritage. This is probably the result of a paradigm shift in the theory of heritage, which, providing a transition to the environmental perception of heritage, led to the inclusion of a wider context. The environmental aspect in studies of strategies for interacting with heritage has revealed a significant resource of both the heritage objects themselves and their information potential. At the same time, this aspect of the study of heritage, as a relatively young area of research, has not yet received enough attention.

The project "Sustainable Historic Cities: Urban Heritage is Good for the Climate" (2011-2012) is one of the long-term efforts to reduce energy consumption and carbon footprint of the built-up environment [10]. According to the study, the active use of heritage sites determines the sustainable nature of their conservation: the use of existing resources where possible instead of dependence on new resources, determine the environmental sustainability of development. Extending the physical life of buildings, strict regulation of new construction, curbing the expansion of urban boundaries, reducing the amount of waste, the prevalence of the landscape development format traditional for a given territory, give the industry an environmental character. Studies show that demolition and new construction produce a greater carbon footprint than the reuse of urban resources [10].

In addition, ecological resource of the information potential of urban heritage sites becomes an object of a separate study. In the past, materials were produced and processed locally, little energy was required for production, material properties were used rationally, leaving a negligible carbon footprint. These are good reasons for both further use of old buildings and use of traditional knowledge in new buildings.

Summing up the results of the study, it is worth noting that the division of heritage resources indicated in the study is artificial, since most of the effects produced are connected and interdependent. At the present stage, whatever the heritage resource of a historical town is taken into account when planning a project, the fundamental principle and starting point remains to ensure the sustainability of urban development, which, while satisfying the needs of the present, does not jeopardize the ability of future generations to satisfy their needs. In view of this, almost all of the projects reviewed also carry out research tasks to analyze the effects of the implementation of theoretical principles in practice. The European experience of using cultural heritage demonstrates how a rational, thoughtful attitude to heritage becomes a powerful engine for the development of a historical city.

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