

## VI. Cultural heritage (sites & buildings) at risk

This topic contributes to SO3.2 “To improve capacities for the sustainable use of cultural heritage and resources”.

<b>THEMATIC FOCUS</b>	<p>The thematic focus of the fourth call in SO 3.2 is on the topic of <b>cultural heritage (sites &amp; buildings) at risk</b>. It directly targets the current challenges related to the continuous pressures resulting from climate change and consequent increase of the occurrence of natural hazards as well as from air pollution and the related degradation of surfaces of historical buildings and monuments. This is relevant for central Europe in view of its rich cultural heritage and needs for an improved protection, revitalisation and valorisation of the existing heritage sites and buildings at risk.</p> <p>As a starting point for exploitation, seven Interreg CE projects with direct and relevant contributions to this topic were identified and are listed at the end of this document. They address this topic from different and complementary perspectives and target different types and specific elements of heritage sites under threat and pressure, such as e.g.:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Mitigation of impacts of climate change and natural hazards on cultural heritage sites;</li> <li>&gt; Preservation and management of historic built areas;</li> <li>&gt; Re-use, preservation and modern management of historical ruins;</li> <li>&gt; Protection and valorisation of archaeological heritage sites;</li> <li>&gt; Revitalisation of historic buildings through Public-Private Partnership schemes;</li> <li>&gt; Valorisation of abandoned historical sites by setting up cultural and creative companies;</li> <li>&gt; Protection and revitalisation of historical parks.</li> </ul>
<b>CHALLENGES</b>	<p>Central Europe has a great diversity of cultural heritage and resources in terms of historical sites, documentary heritage (e.g. archives and library collections), artefacts, traditions, cultural landscapes as well as traditional skills and knowledge. This heritage and its related resources represent important location factors, which strongly contribute to the attractiveness of central Europe’s territory. The protection and valorisation of cultural heritage and resources offer powerful potentials for economic growth (including cultural and creative industries). They generate value and directly benefit citizens.</p> <p>The cultural richness is, however, often not well valorised or even threatened, and related potentials are not sufficiently used due to a lack of funding and investment, insufficient management and preservation skills as well as a lack of coordination. Furthermore, external pressures due to usage conflicts, unsustainable approaches (e.g. mass tourism) and also linked to climate change are negatively impacting central Europe’s cultural heritage with adverse effects on the competitiveness of regions (cf. Territorial Agenda 2020).</p> <p>There is thus the need for facilitating a good balance between the preservation of cultural heritage and sustainable long-term socio-economic development of regions in order to strengthen their attractiveness and competitiveness. Emphasis needs to be given to managing conflicting usage interests and to capitalising the potential of cultural heritage assets for economic, social and cultural activities.</p>
<b>POLICY FRAMEWORK</b>	<p>The topic of cultural heritage (sites &amp; buildings) at risk is directly related and linked to European Initiative 7 “Heritage at risk”, which is part of the “10 European Initiatives” defined by the European Commission as a follow-up to the European Year of Cultural Heritage 2018.<sup>15</sup> In this context the EC also published a study on “Safeguarding cultural heritage from natural and man-made disasters”, which shows effective ways of protecting cultural heritage at risk (through climate change, air pollutions, floods, winds etc.) and paves the way for improved cooperation.<sup>16</sup></p>
<b>EXPECTED RESULTS</b>	<p>By supporting integrated approaches, transnational cooperation will help to improve capacities of public and private sector organisations, who deal with the protection and sustainable use of cultural heritage sites and buildings at risk. This will help to better coordinate the preservation and management of cultural heritage with sustainable growth. The development and implementation of strategies and policies for protecting and valorising cultural heritage sites and buildings will support a sustainable territorial development and trigger economic opportunities and employment at regional level.</p> <p>The main result envisaged can be summarised as: <i>“Improved capacities of the public and private sector for the sustainable use of cultural heritage and resources in central Europe achieved through transnational cooperation”.</i></p>

<sup>15</sup> Further information on Initiative 7 - Heritage at risk available at [https://ec.europa.eu/culture/content/heritage-risk\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/culture/content/heritage-risk_en)

<sup>16</sup> Safeguarding cultural heritage from natural and man-made disasters, <https://publications.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/8fe9ea60-4cea-11e8-be1d-01aa75ed71a1>