

## The Charter of European cultural cities and territories

### Heritage

The heritage value of a city - or of an area - is higher than a mere real estate or a property owned for centuries. Heritage is a relationship to events, through which, generation after generation, a population gives it a sense which distinguishes it from others, and which gives it a universal meaning.

Heritage is the traces of the intermingling and successive contributions, which forged the unique character of each city. It is also the sum of the attitudes of the population towards their common heritage.

### Cities and Areas of Culture - A Living Heritage

The signatory cities of this present Charter do not have a vocation to become museums. Their aim is to conserve and develop a diversified activity, at the heart of, and beyond, their historic centres.

They also endeavour to pursue the work of past builders through harmoniously integrating new constructions of quality.

*\*Each City - or Area - of Culture defines and implements, within the limits of its jurisdiction, a detailed plan to put into practice heritage preservation, enrichment and the valorisation of its heritage.*

### Cities and Areas of Culture - Everyone's Heritage Built by Everybody

One of the priorities of a City or Area of Culture is the re-appropriation by the population of its heritage. Therefore, everyone should be able to decipher, interpret, occupy and reinvent the common property of a city's public places and facilities. Inhabitants should be, more than just users: i.e. responsible and active citizens.

*\* Each City or Area of Culture will rely on a qualified heritage mediation team.*

*\* Each European City - or Area - of Culture will include involved partners (administration, universities, organizations and societies, businesses...) in a permanent local heritage enhancement symposium.*

*\* Each European City or Area of Culture will work closely with the inhabitants to define and re-appropriate their local common heritage.*

### Cities and Areas of Culture - Meeting Points and Places for Culture' Sharing

The common factor between our cities is our wish to see them as thriving cultural centres, and a meeting point between different cultures. We want to consider tourists not only as a mere economic activity, but also as an opportunity for exchanges between fellow humans.

*\* Each City or Area of Culture will carry out a cultural development policy for the whole of its population, with special attention to those with difficulties to access cultural activities.*

*\* Each City or Area of Culture will endeavour to design and implement forms on how to welcome visitors and inhabitants and enable them to meet in a real and effective way.*

### Cities and Areas of Culture - Long Term Development' Guarantors

The Cities and Areas of Culture and Heritage share the common aim of making their local heritage a driving force for economic, cultural, and social development.

Heritage is too often considered a source for short-term income. Cities and Territories signatories of the present charter, manage their heritage with the constant concern for preserving their natural and cultural environments' quality as well as future generations' interests.

*\* Each City or Area of Culture defines a global policy and carries out programs for the preservation and enhancement of the quality of its natural and cultural environment.*