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Transnational methodology for public administrations on the inclusion of the preservation of Art Nouveau Heritage in the urban development context

*Based on Partner Input in the Art Nouveau network, including the final conference of the project,
Urban Planning Study — edited by UIRS Slovenia,
Best practice assessment for decorations and restorations — Hungary,
Art Nouveau Strategy for the partner countries,
Set of recommendations to complete the policy instruments developed within the activity of the transnational consortium.*

This Methodology is intended to provide a tool for an integrated, harmonized and transnational approach to the inclusion of the preservation of Art Nouveau Heritage in the urban development context. This document has been elaborated on the basis of sustainable economic, social and cultural development, respecting the legal frameworks of the involved countries, as well as international principles and standards.

General purpose

A. Integration of Art Nouveau heritage into local planning documents and policies.

Historical preservation at urban legislation level is a matter of national competence. The hierarchical succession of planning documents (land-use plans, building codes at city- and zonal-level) regards heritage as one of the key matters. The depiction of Art Nouveau built heritage should represent a distinct category, which should be ordered, in areas with high density of such heritage, as follows: ensembles of buildings, stand-alone buildings and public spaces and parks, including public art works.

B. Generating local planning policies based on Art Nouveau heritage

In cities where the density of Art Nouveau heritage is above average, it is recommended that Art Nouveau becomes a main driver on investigation, protection and promotion of the cities' historical value. The specific local/national policies, containing professional, financial, and urban marketing approaches, will contribute to the proper treatment of the Art Nouveau heritage, in the benefit of its users (primarily) and of cultural tourism alike.

C. Enabling comparative trans-national research, similar approaches and best-practice exchange in the Danube countries,

regarding identification, rehabilitation and upgrading-retrofitting Art Nouveau buildings, as well as depicting the distinctive areas with higher densities of Art Nouveau heritage in urban plans and strategies, with technical, financial and marketing components.

Common framework of content

At urban level, the strategic approach can be structured as follows:

- map resources — heritage values, state and concentration in the urban structure
- reach consensus on what values and attributes to preserve and protect
- assess the vulnerability of the selected values to change and development
- integrate values and attributes in the urban development frameworks
- prioritize actions for conservation, development and institutional and management capacity development
- establish partnerships and management networks for each main action

All generated strategic documents should follow a similar elaboration procedure:

- Documenting and investigating the current state of the matter: field research for data collection. Charting of main problems — vacancy and decay, ownership, lack of subsidies, lack of craftsmanship — should be collected in a clear manner, using technical descriptions and visual data (for media data — pictures, plans and maps — it is advisable to secure the necessary copyrights). Presentation of the results should include broad text descriptions, data sheets, maps illustrating the evolution and position, photo collections, extracts from archives.
- Stating the attributes of value inside the protection areas, with specific focus on the Art Nouveau subtopic (unless it is the main topic of the investigation itself). It is of utmost importance to present clearly the values to establish

the level of further intervention: restoration, maximum alteration degree, contribution to the general value of the Art Nouveau heritage at urban level.

The two main threats are:

- the retrofit of the building in order to ensure a higher technical standard and lower energy consumption, most of the times at the expense of the original substance and appearance.
- the transformation of buildings due to adaptive re-use, space extension, mostly at roof level.

For both intentions some alterations are possible, but not always in conjunction with preserving intact the heritage value of the buildings.

- Inclusion of the historical component (Art Nouveau included) in the local urban plans and building codes. Designation of conservation areas with a dedicated building code is a mandatory component. Based on this level of local legislation, the necessary and possible level of intervention on the historical structures, spaces and buildings can be stated and followed.
- Management tools for each level of implementation. Building level should enable cooperation between multiple owners and the relation to the local authorities. As institutions already have designated departments and offices, or they can create them and fill in the necessary competences, the case of private owners demands special attention for capacity building, organisational and managerial skills, and willingness to cooperate and (co-)finance the necessary measures and understand the nature of value at hand that limits the desired transformations. At area/neighbourhood level, another level of management is required. Here, two options are available: 1. Dealing exclusively with Art Nouveau buildings, more or less concentrated in an area or 2. Inclusion of a clear area that contains Art Nouveau heritage but not exclusively. Selecting an option depends on the type of tools involved in management, especially in funding availability. The common components are similar to quarter plans and may include neighbourhood contracts, owners / tenants participation in decisions and implementation, creation of dedicated local agencies to ensure the permanent work on those specific urban areas.

Methodology target

Coordination of all planning levels: land-use plans, zoning plans, heritage investigation and strategic approaches. Hierarchical bonds and implications normally result from the framework design. In case this is not a clear path, then the local level is the most adequate to keep the heritage values intact and realize the natural link between planning and architectural and engineering interventions.

As Art Nouveau heritage mostly stands out as being cognoscible and in general well promoted, it is not difficult to mark it in planning documents with different degrees of protection. Also, Art Nouveau heritage is subject to strategies of intervention on built objects in certain restoration programmes. Nevertheless, as individual/local interpretation should be allowed room for, the methods and guidelines should be indicative, to allow areas-based concepts.

Protected areas are the most common form of protection with a high degree of efficiency, given that these areas receive dedicated planning regulation with detailed historical studies and building codes. Furthermore, the implication in the conservation of cultural resources requires management structures and constant follow-up of the current state.

Categories of measures based on stakeholders/responsibility

EU level

soft level, as subsidiarity leaves no place, yet, for European legislation. At this level the most effervescent exchange of experience, professional mobility and skill development takes place. Cooperation projects are available under major strands (like Interreg), allowing also for capacity building

National administration

optimal level to issue legislation, national guidelines, database collection and impose implementation.

It is one of the most effective levels in enabling frameworks. At national level, urban scale documents are evaluated, endorsed and compared with peer documents at ministerial level and other dedicated structures - Heritage or Planning Institutes.

Local administration

links planning documents, investigation and research, and actual interventions through issuing building permits. At local level, a soft factor acts mostly in favour of Art Nouveau heritage — local pride. It is a powerful element of recognition, control and catalysing investments, when the information is well structured, accessible and spread out. Preserving and recognition of Art Nouveau structures, places and buildings becomes a matter of unity in establishing targets and expectations, frameworks and timelines on both public and private side.

Private owners

clustering micro-property into larger structures that can manage several buildings. Owners and tenants are the category most affected by the quality and efficiency of the buildings. As they may not always be dedicated or able to support proper measures, a management and implementation path should be established.

Categories of Art Nouveau heritage

Urban space/structures

Art Nouveau was a time of structural change in society, not just a period of different decoration style. Economical, societal and urban shifts led to bigger scale urban renewals, to improvements in access to housing, to the creation of institutions and a boom of cultural venues (theatres, cinemas). All these were supported by public and private wealth and were deeply connected to changes in public space. New streets, squares and parks were flanked by Art Nouveau buildings, creating a wave of modernity.

Public space

was also shaped to accommodate new mobility, as motor vehicles and public transportation appeared and spread, thus leading to a broader and clearer street structure. Replacement of entire quarters with low life standards or reduced resistance to accidents (fire, earthquakes) gave way to new investments procedures, more coordinated, through which public and private capital demanded New Cities.

Green spaces and parks

appeared in cities as an attribute to a healthy, social way of living, in which citizens were encouraged to spend more time outside buildings, as more time was available due to improved working conditions.

Ensembles and resorts

also represented big scale investments, supporting the modern view on spending leisure time and recuperating health.

Buildings

marked a significant jump in scale, setting new benchmarks in height, density, living and work conditions, relation to daylight and, very important, increased use of reinforced concrete, that allowed easily an increased urban scale.

For decorations (such as: ceramic tiles, stone, metal, wood, terrazzo) there are already specific technical guidelines, that should function even in the absence of a planning methodology.

Recommendations on urban planning

Urban Planning as public responsibility is the main driver of quality management, and should include historical areas, buildings and structures.

Planning activities involving built heritage should pay very special attention to conservation and the careful treatment of extensions and changes due to change of use. Art Nouveau structures, ensembles and even apparently scattered buildings follow a transformation strategy characteristic for the turn of the century, as an effort was made towards modernising not just the building techniques, but also the city structure by creating new fronts, squares, streets, public spaces and parks, all in keeping-up with the general progress of society at that time.

As part of Art Nouveau heritage is in private ownership, there is also planning generated by private owners and developers/managers. This is a rare case, but if encountered, it should be treated in similar terms as public properties when it comes to protection.

Private ownership has a higher impact in the case of building renovations or changes, which requires attention to the architectural/engineering projects and close supervision of the works. Best results can be expected if a dedicated Renovation Guide on Art Nouveau Heritage is already elaborated and widely distributed among institutions, professional practitioners, educators and citizens.

Complementary topics

Guidelines for architectural and engineering interventions

The general trend is to protect, repair and develop what is already there, as already most building permits in Europe are issued on existing buildings retrofit, renovation and restoration. Art Nouveau heritage has a favourable status throughout Europe, being still in generally good shape, with a good level of recognition and subject to numerous programmes and transnational cooperation frameworks.

Urban lighting schemes

For urban areas that have specific features from an architectural or functional point of view (high-streets, pedestrian pathways, squares, waterfronts etc.) the public lighting of buildings and public spaces is a strong marker of this specificity, if done in a coordinated, unitary manner. As Art Nouveau facades are abundant in decoration, variety of textures and materials, they represent clear targets for public lighting. But this variety also represents the main danger, as lighting should not be a competitor of the building, putting up to many colours, or warm and cold light next to each other, or trying to light up separately each element.

Public procurement issues

Official terms of reference for tendering of works and services must follow quality criteria only. For converging results, local retrofit and restoration programmes that accept packages of buildings are recommended. Sometimes these programmes are in conjunction with subsidies or reduced interest loans for owners, matchmaking procedures with building companies, specialists and craftsmen.

International cooperation and exchange

Creating a platform in the Danube Region, to cover common approaches to migration of practice and knowledge. A permanent working group with representatives on a voluntary basis could use the following working methodology:

- Attracting members and other stakeholders (NGOs) in bi-annual thematic meetings and study visits
- Participation in training courses such as summer-schools or similar
- Build-up of network of independent experts, at national level, to assist in running tasks
- Remote communication tools (webinars), to deal with more demanding running topics (financing tools, energy efficiency, management and maintenance)
- Further participation in cross-national projects and cooperation
- Joint publications promoting rehabilitation of Art Nouveau heritage

SWOT Diagram

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Art Nouveau is an attractive and unique heritage • Widespread and with characteristics that are traceable within the region • Art Nouveau buildings carry strong regional identity • Existing best practice examples of conserving or restoring Art Nouveau heritage in the region • Internationally renowned cases that motivated civil society to rally for the safeguarding of Art Nouveau heritage • Existing networks that promote Art Nouveau heritage internationally 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OWNERSHIP - ownership uncertainty and/or excessive fragmentation, • USE: most buildings are residential and therefore not entirely accessible; vacancy, underutilization, sub-standard retrofitting and restoration, (functional) misuse, with the loss of certain heritage values • RESOURCES: money — high costs for maintenance and restoration; time - long process for owners/investors to start renovating; knowledge — lack of skilled craftsmen and manufacturers — Art Nouveau heritage raises many challenges in restoration and maintenance • Numerous Art Nouveau heritage objects are threatened by urban development, lack of users and policies.
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incipient network of regional institutions (also supported through the present project) • Participation of civil society organizations and communities in planning procedures is possible • Decent legal framework — adopted conservation rules, international provisions • European funding opportunities for a wide range of initiatives • Opportunities to promote Art Nouveau as part of European heritage (events, networks, cultural routes) • Existing initiatives for the promotion of Art Nouveau heritage - private sector initiatives (enterprises, NGOs, local communities) • Regional support for tourism development, tourism initiatives • Raising interest in Art Nouveau heritage within the professional community • Raising interest in the importance of heritage for health and wellbeing • Raising awareness regarding using heritage for climate resilience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gaps in existing regional framework for heritage management and funding • Lack of financial mechanisms and instruments for funding conservation and renovation of heritage • Lack of coordinated investments in historical areas • Lack of tourism development plans (for example to counter mass tourism) • Regional demographic trends — gentrification • Strategic planning - most urban plans and development strategies are dealing with valorization of AN built heritage, though sometimes lacking systemic/integrated approaches and operational measures; lack of municipal strategic development plans • Capacity: Lack of interdisciplinary approaches in conservation, planning, community, participation, the small capacity of public administrations to offer guidance and support to private owners in maintaining and restoring their properties • Lack of information on, and promotion of, the contribution of Art Nouveau heritage to various aspects of development • Climate change

Comparative Advantages and Strategic Orientations

Premises:

As not all identified weakness and threats are possible to overcome at the trans-national level, it is useful to focus on opportunities and existing strengths. Therefore, the present strategy wishes encourage cooperation between different stakeholders (both public, and private), at all levels (trans-national, national, regional, local). A better cooperation is needed also among all sectors working with heritage – administration, urban planning, cultural sector, economic and tourism sector, research and education sector etc. This cooperation should take into consideration all the possible roles and responsibilities of stakeholders, in order to foster wide stewardship for heritage and to improve existing legal and financial frameworks. Better understanding and data are needed regarding the benefits Art Nouveau heritage can offer to high relevance topics such as sustainable development, climate change, and health and wellbeing.

SO: Strengths — Opportunities

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<p>Measures to leverage strengths to maximize opportunities = attacking strategy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use Art Nouveau heritage to strengthen civil society and community participation in urban planning procedures • Raise the amount of European funds allocated to Art Nouveau heritage through developing projects financed by various programmes (Interreg, Creative Europe etc.) • Develop projects and activities to promote Art Nouveau heritage as part of European heritage (European Heritage Days) • Develop cultural routes dedicated to Art Nouveau heritage • Apply for European Heritage Label for certain Art Nouveau sites • Create proposals for transnational nominations of Art Nouveau heritage for the Unesco World Heritage List • Create educational activities involving various institutions working with Art Nouveau heritage • Enhance existing interpretation of Art Nouveau heritage through international cooperation • Conduct research on the benefits of Art Nouveau heritage to various sectors (education, economic, health and wellbeing, social etc.)

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Measures to counter weaknesses and threats = build strengths for defensive strategy

- Further develop networks, taskforces and initiatives to counteract issues raised by excessive fragmentation and sub-standard utilization of Art Nouveau heritage
- Improve existing capacities and framework in order to develop a participatory approach to heritage management
- Design or improve public policies regarding Art Nouveau heritage
- Use the benefits of Art Nouveau heritage to improve the quality of living in urban environments and tackle demographic challenges
- Promote lesser known areas rich in Art Nouveau heritage to attract tourists from popular destinations
- Use Art Nouveau heritage to research and develop projects for energy efficient and climate resilient buildings

Weaknesses	Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OWNERSHIP — ownership uncertainty and/or excessive fragmentation, • USE: most buildings are residential and therefore not entirely accessible; vacancy, underutilization, sub-standard retrofitting and restoration, (functional) misuse, with the loss of certain heritage values • RESOURCES: money — high costs for maintenance and restoration; time - long process for owners/investors to start renovating; knowledge — lack of skilled craftsmen and manufacturers — Art Nouveau heritage raises many challenges in restoration and maintenance • Numerous Art Nouveau heritage objects are threatened by urban development, lack of users and policies. • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incipient network of regional institutions (also supported through the present project) • Participation of civil society organizations and communities in planning procedures is possible • Decent legal framework — adopted conservation rules, international provisions • European funding opportunities for a wide range of initiatives • Opportunities to promote Art Nouveau as part of European heritage (events, networks, cultural routes) • Existing initiatives for the promotion of Art Nouveau heritage — private sector initiatives (enterprises, NGOs, local communities) • Regional support for tourism development, tourism initiatives • Raising interest in Art Nouveau heritage within the professional community • Raising interest in the importance of heritage for health and wellbeing • Raising awareness regarding using heritage for climate resilience

Measures to counter weaknesses through exploiting opportunities = build strengths for attacking strategy

- Develop stakeholder's capacity in protecting Art Nouveau heritage through international cooperation with existing networks, supported through European funding
- Conduct research on new trends in managing heritage sites, as well as on mitigation of conservation and use of buildings and sites
- Further develop networks, taskforces and initiatives to counteract issues raised by excessive fragmentation and sub-standard utilization of Art Nouveau heritage
- Use Art Nouveau heritage to research and develop projects for energy efficient and climate resilient buildings

WT: Weaknesses — Threats

Weaknesses

- OWNERSHIP — ownership uncertainty and/or excessive fragmentation,
- USE: most buildings are residential and therefore not entirely accessible; vacancy, underutilization, sub-standard retrofitting and restoration, (functional) misuse, with the loss of certain heritage values
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- Numerous Art Nouveau heritage objects are threatened by urban development, lack of users and policies.
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Opportunities

- Gaps in existing regional framework for heritage management and funding
- Lack of financial mechanisms and instruments for funding the conservation and renovation of heritage
- Lack of coordinated investments in historical areas
- Lack of tourism development plans (for example to counter mass tourism)
- Regional demographic trends — gentrification
- Strategic planning — most urban plans and development strategies are dealing with valorization of AN built heritage, though sometimes lacking systemic/integrated approaches and operational measures; lack of municipal strategic development plans
- Capacity: Lack of interdisciplinary approaches in conservation, planning, community, participation, small capacity of public administrations to offer guidance and support to private owners in maintaining and restoring their properties
- Lack of information on, and promotion of, the contribution of Art Nouveau heritage to various aspects of development
- Climate change

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