

ITALY

Historic Centre of Florence

Brief description

Built on the site of an Etruscan settlement, Florence, the symbol of the Renaissance, rose to economic and cultural pre-eminence under the Medici in the 15th and 16th centuries. Its 600 years of extraordinary artistic activity can be seen above all in the 13th-century cathedral (Santa Maria del Fiore), the Church of Santa Croce, the Uffizi and the Pitti Palace, the work of great masters such as Giotto, Brunelleschi, Botticelli and Michelangelo.

1. Introduction

Year(s) of Inscription

1982

Agency responsible for site management

- Municipality of Florence
Assessorato di Cultura
Direzione Ufficio Tematico e di Progetto
"Cultura"
Via Ghibellina 30
50122 Florence
Tuscany, Italy
E-mail: c.francini@comune.fi.it
Website: www.comune.fi.it

2. Statement of Significance

Inscription Criteria

C (i), (ii), (iii), (iv), (vi)

Justification provided by the State Party

- 1) The city of Florence, with its complex urban fabric and stratified pattern of archaeological remains that are manifest today, provides a unique example of human activity.
- 2) The exceptionally rich heritage of the city, which bears witness to immense artistic activity, stands forth as a unique model, both from the historical and the aesthetic points of view.
- 3) This immense record of the past is a heritage of the greatest importance which goes beyond national frontiers and requires exceptional measures of conservation.

As provided in ICOMOS evaluation

ICOMOS would underscore the fact that the historic

centre of Florence responds to nearly all the criteria defined by the Convention.

1) Criterion (i)- the urban complex of Florence is in itself a unique artistic realization, a chef-d'oeuvre absolute, the fruit of a continuous creation over more than six centuries. Leaving aside its museums (the Archaeological Museum, Uffizi Bargello, Pitti, Galleria dell' Accademia, etc.), the greatest concentration of universally renowned works of art in the world is found here - the Cathedral of Santa Maria del Fiore, the Baptistery and the Campanile of Giotto, Piazza de la Signoria dominated by the Palazzo Vecchio and the Palazzo Uffizi, San Lorenzo, Santa Maria Novella, Santa Croce and the Pazzi chapel, the Convent of San Marco which houses paintings of Fra Angelico, Santo Spirito, San Miniato, etc.

2) Criterion (ii) - Since the Quattrocento, Florence has exerted a predominate influence on the development of architecture and the monumental arts- first in Italy, and then throughout Europe: the artistic principles of the Renaissance were defined there from the beginning of the 15th century by Brunelleschi, Donatello and Masaccio. It was in the Florentine milieu that two universal geniuses of the arts -Leonardo da Vinci and Michelangelo - were formed and asserted.

3) Criterion (iii) - the historic centre of Florence attests in an exceptional manner, and by its unique coherence, to its power as a merchant-city of the Middle Ages and of the Renaissance. From its past, Florence has preserved entire streets, fortified palaces (Palazzo Spini, Palazzo del Podestà, Palazzo della Signoria), loggie (Loggia del Bigallo, Loggia dei Lanzi, the Loggi degli Innocenti and del Mercato Nuovo), fountains, a marvellous bridge of the 14th century lined with shops, the Ponte Vecchio. Various trades, organized into prosperous arte have left several monuments such as the Or San Michele.

4) Criterion (iv) - Florence, a first-rate economic and political power in Europe from the 14th to the 17th century, was covered during that period with prestigious buildings which translated the munificence of the bankers and the princes: Palazzo Rucellai, Palazzo Strozzi, Palazzo Gondi, Palazzo Riccardi-Medici, Palazzo Pandolfini, Palazzo Pitti and the Boboli Gardens- as well as the sacristy of San Lorenzo, the funerary chapel of the Medicis, and the Biblioteca Laurenziana, etc.

5) Criterion (vi) - Florence is materially associated with events of a universal importance. It was in the milieu of the Neo-platonic Accademia that the concept of the Renaissance was forged. Florence is

the birthplace of modern humanism inspired by Landino, Marsilio Ficino, Pico de la Mirandola, etc.

Committee Decision

The Committee made no statement.

- Statement of Significance does not adequately defines the outstanding universal value of the site

Boundaries and Buffer Zone

- Status of boundaries of the site: adequate
- No buffer zone has been defined. Further work needed
- The site is situated in a more extensive area subject to protective and preservation which make use of the following instruments:
 - The City Master Plan approved on 1998 identifies the historic centre area as a homogeneous zone (A) of cultural and environmental interest and by means of a special regulatory system it provides for admissible construction work, organized according to the assignment of nine “building classifications”, deriving from identification of different historical-architectural typologies and appurtenances
 - Building Regulation identifies, furthermore, the “privileged” functions such as residence and related services
 - Technical Regulations for Implementation of the City Master Plan and the Building Regulation identifies several historical-architectural typologies corresponding with different levels of admissible construction work for each individual building
 - The City Traffic Master Plan establishes in the area approximately corresponding with the town center, included within the “Viali” (ring roads) and the Oltrarno district, a Restricted Traffic Area, divided into five sectors marked by the letters A, B, C, D and E. The regulation in force defines a series of limiting criteria for access, circulation and stopping, in the spirit of the provisions in the Rules of the Road and in observance of an environmental compatibility threshold to be used in the Historic Centre areas

Status of Authenticity/Integrity

- World Heritage site values have been maintained

3. Protection

Legislative and Administrative Arrangements

- There are various laws and administrative provisions that project the site:
 - The City Master Plan dated 1998 subdivide the municipal territory into nine homogeneous zones and identify the historic centre area as a homogeneous zone (A) of cultural and environmental interest. In the A-type homogeneous zones, composed of the historical fabric of the building assets in the Municipal territory, nine classifications of buildings are also distinguished specifying the degree of admissible intervention work on the individual buildings deriving from the identification of different historical-architectural typologies and appurtenances.
 - The Building Regulation approved on 1999 identifies the “privileged” functions such residence and related services; “forbidden” functions such as for example industrial, and artisan concerns larger than 250 square meters, large-scale retail trade concerns (more than 2500 square meters of selling area), barracks, prisons, etc.; “tolerated” functions other than those mentioned
 - The Structural Plan (regional law 1995) is a planning tool which set an objective to adopt a of growth social, economic and cultural growth that does not erode the patrimony of territorial and environmental resources, but instead consigns them intact to future generations. The Structural Plan identifies the strategic objectives that the city of Florence must achieve in the next few years and not only provides for territorial planning but also programming for large-scale services.
 - Legislative Degree 2004, n.42. Cultural Heritage and Landscape Code establishes an instrument to defend and promote Italian heritage which provides for the involvement of the local authorities and irrevocably defines the alienation limits for public property. The code identifies two types of cultural assets: cultural assets in the strict sense, coinciding with things of historical, artistic, archaeological interest pursuant to law 1089 of 1939, and the cultural assets, in a broader sense, composed of the Italian landscape. This measure subjects real assets of historic and artistic interest to the surveillance of the Monuments and Fine Arts Commission and is implemented in the authorization of the restoration projects and in the supervision of works
- The protection arrangements are considered highly effective

4. Management

Use of site/property

- Urban centre

Management /Administrative Body

- The Historical Centre – World Heritage UNESCO office has set a goal to create a solid network of bonds and collaboration with the various institutions and the Municipal offices to coordinate the intervention work to manage the historic centre. For this purpose an inter-managerial group was created (with management representatives from the Municipal Planning Department, the Municipal Police Department, the Mobility Department, the Metropolitan Area and Decentralization Office, Economical Promotions, Strategic Planning, SIT Work Planning and the Department of Economic Development) and a series of periodic meetings has commenced with the Monuments and Fine Arts Offices. These meetings serve facilitate a round-table discussion regarding the problems of the historic centre and attempt to coordinate the forces of the various institutions operating in the Territory
- Management under protective legislation
- Site manager to be appointed
- Levels of public authority who are primarily involved with the management of the site: national; regional; local
- The current management system is sufficiently effective

Actions proposed:

- Drafting and adopting the Management Plan

5. Management Plan

- Management plan under preparation
- Title Implementation commence: 06/2006
- Reactive Monitoring Report to the Committee: State of Conservation Report 1998: The Delegate of Italy informed the Committee that the high tension power line is located outside of the jurisdiction of the Municipality of Florence and that it would not be visible from the World Heritage site which is limited to the Historic Centre of the city
- Action taken to implement the Committee's decision: No action was undertaken since the Committees jurisdiction regards a boundary area outside of the jurisdiction of the Historic Centre of Florence

6. Financial Resources

Financial situation

- State Budget; regional Funding; Municipal Administration
- Private sponsors; free donations; Bank funds; Funding of ecclesiastical authorities
- Sufficient

7. Staffing Levels

- Number of staff: 1.156

Rate of access to adequate professional staff across the following disciplines:

- Very good: conservation, management, promotion; interpretation; education; visitor management
- There are various associations that operate in the Florence Territory and conduct supporting activities for measures regarding the protection and preservation of the city, including: - Friends of Florentine Museums; - Italian Historic Dwellings Association.- Archeoclub;- The Italian Environment Fund; - Get to Know Florence Association

8. Sources of Expertise and Training in Conservation and Management Techniques

- Scientific institutions: There are various services and centres in the territory that offer specialized training and contribute to the technical preparation of the personnel who work in the site including:
 - The Opificio delle Pietre Dure, an independent body autonomous institution of the Ministry of Cultural Heritage and Activities that conducts research activities in the artworks restoration field
 - The Opificio delle Pietre Dure and the Monuments and Fine Arts Commissions have furthermore involved the main research centres of the University and of the National Research Council in the application of the most advanced technical-scientific knowledge both for the development of sophisticated diagnosis and monitoring systems and to develop rigorous tools and methods to intervene on assets at risk.
 - The University of Florence; The University in recent years has implemented specific courses for the preservation and restoration of cultural assets
- Training available to stakeholders

9. Visitor Management

- Visitor statistics: 6.427.511 (ISTAT survey of the tourist movement in the accommodation facilities), 2004
- Visitor facilities: Florence offers numerous accommodation and information services for visitors, including among the main services:
 - Tourist Information Offices
 - Uffizi Centre: service for telephone reservations for visits to the main state museums
 - Public Toilets & Guide to Public Toilets (location, cost, baby changing area, disabled access)
 - Restaurant guide
 - Courtesy Point
 - Public transportation within the historic centre
 - Hotels reservations
 - Tourist bus Parking lots
 - Tourist First-Aid Station
 - Tourist Help
 - Bus City sightseeing
 - Different proposed routes may be consulted on the municipality of Florence Internet site
- The Management Tourist Plan, adopted with resolution no 605 dated April 24, 1999 by the Municipal Council, has performed and is performing the primary function of re qualifying the existing accommodation facilities, and also as a series of additional services that would have been hard to find just a few years ago

10. Scientific Studies

- Risk assessment, studies related to the value of the site, monitoring exercises, condition surveys, archaeological surveys, visitor management, transportation studies
- An in-depth study of the actual Florentine situation was conducted to draft the Strategic Plan of the Florentine Metropolitan Area. December 2000 was established a Promotion Committee that entrusted a Scientific Committee with the duty of preparing a Report on the city and its metropolitan area, in order to identify the main strong points and weaknesses of the area, and indicate the strategic objectives of intervention and a series of objectives and proposals to be achieved
- The studies performed to realize the Strategic Plan provide important data for the analysis of the actual economic, social and cultural situation in the Florentine area that are indispensable to strategic planning for the city

and to elaborate the Management Plan for the site

11. Education, Information and Awareness Building

- No signs referring to World Heritage site
- World Heritage Convention Emblem used on some publications
- Adequate awareness of World Heritage among: visitors, local authorities
- Need for awareness raising: more communication; promotion through an educational campaign in schools; identification of the site by means of permanent signs; observance of the World Heritage rules regarding the identification plates and regarding the logo
- Strategy/programme for the site: Historical Centre – World Heritage UNESCO office has begun collaborating with the UNESCO Centre of Florence to promote educational initiatives in Florentine schools
- Heritage days: the Fiorenza Project, in collaboration with the UNESCO Centre of Florence, deals with the realisation of a short film with the theme of Florence World Heritage in order to give the perception that young people of Florence and foreign residents have of the history and culture of Florence
- Web site available; www.comune.fi.it; www.sitiunesco.it

12. Factors affecting the Property (State of Conservation)

Reactive monitoring reports

- World Heritage Bureau sessions: 23rd (1999)
- World Heritage Committee sessions: 22nd (1998)

Conservation interventions

- Even before being included in the list, the patrimony of the city of was subject to periodic inspections and monitoring. The preservation works performed in the site from 1982 until today have been numerous and continuous even if there has been no instances of urban redevelopment, but rather single restoration measures in conformity with special and individual needs
- Present state of conservation: Very good

Threats and Risks to site

- Natural disasters
- Specific issues: Risk of floods

- Emergency measures taken: Drafting of a Plan to Preserve cultural heritage and landscape in case of flooding

13. Monitoring

- No formal monitoring programme
- Measures taken/planned: the realisation of the future Management Plan will allow to develop key indicators for monitoring the preservation of the site's value

14. Conclusions and Recommended Actions

- Main benefits of WH status: management
- Strength/Weaknesses of management: minimal coordination and control between the institutions responsible for the restoration and for the maintenance of the historical/artistic patrimony, for urban furniture; for mobility in the historic centre and for waste management. Minimal promotion in the schools and failure to comply with the provisions of the World Heritage regarding identification plates and the logo

Future actions:

- Drafting and adopting the Management Plan; organisation responsible: Municipality of Florence Direzione Ufficio Tematico e di Progetto Cultural Historical Centre-World Heritage Centre-World Heritage UNESCO Office. Timeframe: 2006