



Priority sector:  
**Protecting Cultural Heritage**

## EEA GRANTS 2009-14

# Conservation and Revitalisation of Cultural and Natural Heritage

The EEA Financial Mechanism shall contribute to the reduction of economic and social disparities in the European Economic Area, and to strengthening the bilateral relations between the EEA EFTA States – Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway – and the Beneficiary States. The programme area shall contribute to these two overall objectives.

### Objective

Cultural and natural heritage for future generations safe-guarded and conserved and made publicly accessible

### Expected outcomes

- Cultural heritage restored, renovated and protected
- Cultural history documented
- Local communities further developed and economically sustainable livelihoods established through the revitalisation of cultural and natural heritage
- Cultural heritage made accessible to the public



## Relevance of support

Culture is an important factor in socio-economic development. The protection and conservation of cultural heritage contributes to social cohesion and to the preservation of history for future generations. The Lisbon Strategy highlights tourism as an important element of the cultural sector.

The Council of Europe Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society emphasises the value and potential of cultural heritage widely used as a resource for sustainable development and quality of life in a constantly evolving society. Promotion and presentation of the diversity of cultural and natural heritage is essential.

Furthermore, the 4th meeting of the European Heritage Heads Forum (Bratislava and Vienna) 2009, stated in its final recommendations the value of heritage as an economic driver and highlighted the pivotal role of heritage in the development and implementation of sustainable economic recovery packages. It also stated that investment in heritage has a direct impact on the growth of cultural tourism which leads to long-term social and economic benefits.

The rehabilitation and restoration of monuments and sites has a considerable potential for creating new jobs in both central and remote areas. This sector can absorb a broad range of categories of workers,

from skilled to unskilled labour. Greater demand for nature and cultural tourism may create new niche markets for tourism that evolve around cultural heritage and natural heritage sites. Sustainable tourism also creates locally based enterprises. At the same time, it is of vital importance to protect and secure the cultural and natural heritage from being damaged by conflicting commercial development.

## Suggested activities

- Support measures to conserve and restore monuments /sites and items of movable cultural heritage
- Support revitalisation of cultural heritage by supporting new and innovative uses of old and/or abandoned buildings
- Support training and competence building programmes: methodology, approach, management, traditional skills
- Support development of eco-tourism and other sustainable tourism initiatives both in and close to selected natural and cultural areas, e.g. protected areas and monuments
- Support measures to protect cultural and natural heritage sites from degradation as a result of unsustainable commercial development
- Support development of national strategies and practices for management of the cultural heritage sector

Reduce economic and social disparities  
Strengthen bilateral relations