

FINLAND

Protecting Cultural Heritage

The primary means to protect built cultural heritage in Finland is through land-use planning as prescribed in the Land Use and Building Act (2000). The important role of cultural heritage and cultural landscapes in all land-use planning is strongly stressed in the Act.

In addition to the Land Use and Building Act, Finland has other specific acts to protect cultural heritage:

- Act on the Protection of Buildings (1985): Protection of nationally valuable buildings and/or sites primarily outside the planned area.
- Church Act (1993): Churches and parish houses built before 1917 are automatically protected.
- Act on Archaeological Remains (1995): Archaeological sites are automatically protected. About 14,000 pre-historic and historic sites are registered.
- Decree on the Protection of State-Owned Buildings (1985): About 900 buildings and/or sites are protected.

The National Board of Antiquities is the national expert organisation for archaeological and cultural historic sites. The Ministry of the Environment has a decisive role at the national level in land-use planning and in the protection of buildings and sites under the Act on the Protection of Buildings.

The major threats to the built heritage in Finland (in the order of frequency) are:

- fire
- misuse and neglect
- moisture damage
- old or altered land-use plans that do not support the maintenance of the built heritage.

Main Development Trends

The important trends in Finland affecting the maintenance and use of the built heritage are:

- The polarisation of economic growth between the ten growth centres and the rest of the country, which is causing an overall threat to cultural heritage throughout Finland.
- Changes in agricultural production, which result in many of the old structures and buildings being taken out of use and which radically affect the cultural landscape.
- Local authorities have greater responsibility in land-use plan-

Old farmhouse in decay



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ning matters since the Land Use and Building Act came into force on 1 January 2000.

- Stronger emphasis on public participation in land-use planning and heritage conservation under the Land Use and Building Act.

Heritage in the General Risk Preparedness Strategies

The Finnish Red Cross is responsible for organising training for the military in human rights issues during armed conflict. The Hague Convention is incorporated into the training programme, with expertise being sought from ICOMOS and the Finnish Ministry of the Environment.

The working group for the implementation of the Hague Convention in Finland has been operational since 1996 and is now finishing its task. It will present a list of monuments and sites to be marked with the blue shield in Finland.

The national committees of ICOMOS and ICOM in Finland invited the representatives of the Defence Forces, the Civic Protection and Training Organisations and the Fire and Rescue forces to discuss cultural heritage as an integral part of all risk preparedness activities. The fact that armed conflicts are most likely to take place in urban areas has elevated the question of the built heritage to a key point in discussions on co-operation.

Risk Preparedness in the Heritage Field

Through work being co-ordinated by the Finnish Museums Association (www.museoliitto.fi/englanti/index.htm), all museums in Finland are required to prepare a Risk Analysis and a Risk Preparedness Plan.

The Finnish national committees of ICOMOS and ICOM have produced a guidebook aimed at Finnish crisis relief workers working abroad. The guidebook *Integrating the Protection of the Cultural Property into Disaster Relief Work* (1999, 2nd edition 2000, in Finnish *Kulttuuriomaisuuden suojelu osana kriisityötä*) gives basic advice on how to take cultural heritage into account in relief work. A number of conventions are appended to the book: the Hague Convention; the Second Protocol to the Hague Convention; the Unidroit Convention on Stolen or Illegally Exported Cultural Objects; the Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property; and the World Heritage Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage.

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