

## The Post-war Architecture of the Former Socialist Capitals and its Potential for a Transnational Serial World Heritage Nomination

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*Expert meeting of the German-Belarusian working group on “Architecture and Urban Development of Socialist Realism Main Avenues (проспекты) and Squares in Central and Eastern Europe (1930s – 1950s)”, initiated and organised by the “Institute for Heritage Management GmbH (Cottbus)” and the “Foundation Cultural Heritage and Modernity (Minsk)” and funded by the Federal Foreign Office (Minsk, 2017)*

### Background

The idea of elaborating a new serial transnational World Heritage nomination in regards of the topic of the socialistic postwar architecture of Central and Eastern Europe was born at the **joint Belarusian – German workshop on identification, documentation and preservation of the World Cultural Heritage** which was held in Minsk (Belarus) in **October 2015**.

The recommendation was to start a work on the serial nomination of modern heritage of the 20th century in form of main streets of former socialist capitals in Central and Eastern Europe. The key property in the future nomination should be the Independency Avenue in Minsk as a paradigm case for neoclassical triumphant ensembles in Soviet block capitals after the WW2.

## Background

Workshops in September and December of 2016 (Minsk, Belarus) with the participation of leading experts in the field of 20th-century architecture and the UNESCO experts from Belarus, Russia, Ukraine, Poland, the Czech Republic and Germany.

The declaration was adopted on the outcome of these meetings:

Request the authorities of Czech Republic, Germany, Poland, Russian Federation and Ukraine and other potential participating states to inscribe the post-war socialist cultural heritage, in particular architecture and urban planning, of Eastern and Central Europe on their national Tentative Lists to the World Heritage Convention;

Also request the governments, appropriate authorities and management bodies of these countries to support the project of preparing a serial transnational nomination dossier for a property representing post-war socialist architecture and urban planning;

Recognize the importance of comparative analyses in the preparation of World Heritage nomination dossiers, and therefore decide to take measures for a joint cooperation and coordination of the efforts to prepare the comparative analysis of post-war socialist architecture and urban planning focusing on the requirements of the future World Heritage transnational nomination.

## Requirements for Serial Nominations

137. Serial properties will include **two or more component** parts related by clearly defined links:

- a) ... reflect cultural, social or functional links over time that provide, where relevant, landscape, ecological, evolutionary or habitat connectivity.
- b) **Each component part should contribute to the Outstanding Universal Value** of the property as a whole in a substantial, scientific, readily defined and discernible way, and may include, inter alia, intangible attributes. The resulting OUV should be easily understood and communicated.
- c) ... in order to avoid an excessive fragmentation of component parts, the process of nomination of the property, including the selection of the component parts, should take fully into account the **overall manageability and coherence of the property...**
- d) and provided it is the **series as a whole** – and not necessarily the individual parts of it – which are of **Outstanding Universal Value**.

(UNESCO. Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention, 2015)

## Requirements for Serial Nominations

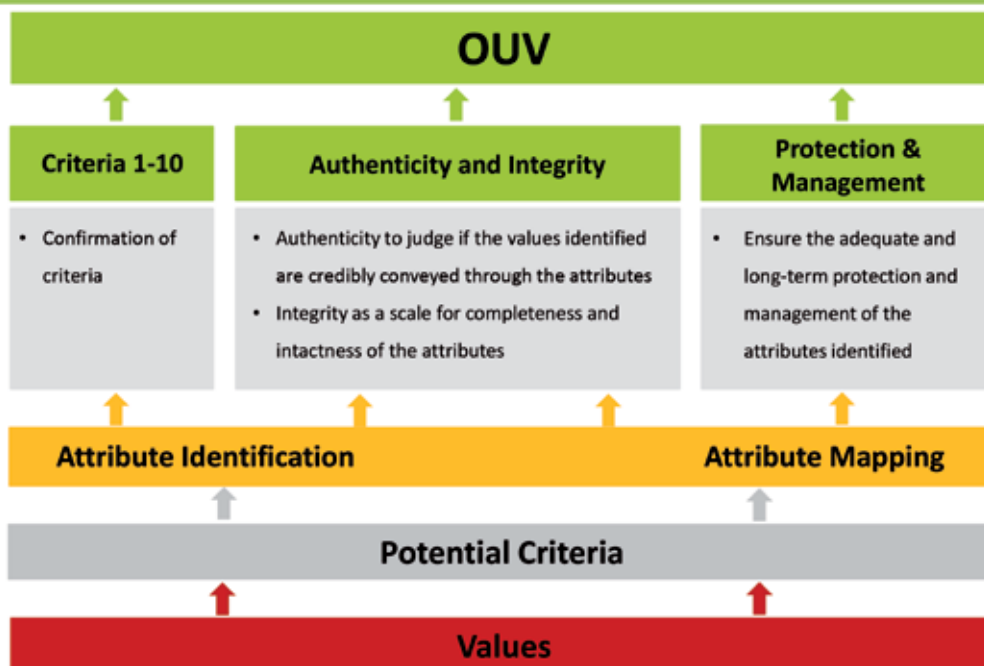
138. A serial nominated property may occur :

- a) on the territory of a single State Party (serial national property); or
- b) within the territory of different States Parties, which need not be contiguous and is nominated with the consent of all States Parties concerned (serial transnational property)

139. Serial nominations, whether from one State Party or multiple States, may be submitted for evaluation over several nomination cycles, provided that the first property nominated is of Outstanding Universal Value in its own right. States Parties planning serial nominations phased over several nomination cycles are encouraged to inform the Committee of their intention in order to ensure better planning.

(UNESCO. Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention, 2015)

## Assessment of the criteria, Authenticity & Integrity, Protection & Management and OUV



Schmidt, et al (2017) In Search of OUV: A Methodology for Attribute Mapping in the Circular Villages of Wendland (In Press)

## Post-War Architecture of Former Socialist Countries Capitals in Central and Eastern Europe: Main Streets (Magistrals)

### Identification of values:

- Architecture of the 20th century as a gap on the World Heritage List
- Outstanding heritage of neoclassical triumphant architecture of capitals of former Soviet countries in Central and Eastern Europe, a symbiosis of professional urban planning analysis and triumphal Imperial rhetoric.
- Main Streets are treated as city focusing axis planned in accordance with Ecole des Beaux Arts tradition.
- Combination of residential housings + administration buildings + squares and boulevards with rich green zones.
- Core period of the nomination will be the architecture of the 1950s with the 1930s architecture as a resource and a prototype for social realism.
- Decorative features and ornaments with elements in the national style.

## Potential World Heritage

**Potential Names:** Architecture and Urban Development of Socialist Realism. Main Avenues and Squares in Central and Eastern Europe (1930s – 1950s) / Post-War Architecture of Former Socialist Countries Capitals in Central and Eastern Europe: Main Streets (Magistrals) and Square

### Potential Partner Cities

<b>Minsk:</b>	<b>Independence Avenue (Проспект Ленина (Независимости))</b>
<b>Moscow:</b>	<u>Tverskaya Street</u> (prototype for the new neo-classical avenue)
<b>Kiev:</b>	<u>Khreshchatyk Street</u>
<b>Char'kiv:</b>	<u>Freedom Square</u> (prototype for neo-classical redesign of constructivist architecture)
<b>Warsaw:</b>	<u>Ulica Marszałkowska</u>
<b>Berlin:</b>	<u>Stalinallee (Karl-Marx-Allee)</u>



## Potential Criteria for the Socialist Post-War Architecture in Central and Eastern Europe

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- (ii)** exhibit an important interchange of human values, over a span of time or within a cultural area of the world, on developments in architecture or technology, monumental arts, town planning or landscape design
- (iv)** be an outstanding example of a type of building, architectural or technological ensemble or landscape which illustrates (a) significant stage(s) in human history

UNESCO 2011: Preparing World Heritage Nominations, 2 Edition P. 37ff.

## Confirmation Criteria ii & iv and Authenticity & Integrity

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- This property is an example of neoclassical triumphant architecture of middle of 20 century and reflects an important interchange of human values after WW2 within socialist countries, characterizes the developments in architecture and urban planning, monumental arts and landscape design **(criteria ii)**
- This is an example of outstanding architectural and urban ensemble which illustrates a significant stage in human history **(criteria iv);**
- This property is a symbiosis of professional urban planning analysis and triumphal Imperial rhetoric which directly associated with the idea of the triumph of the Victory empire and the common ideological conception of victorious socialism **(criteria vi).**

## Attributes of Socialist Post-War Architecture in Central and Eastern Europe

### Common Attributes:

- neoclassical triumphant architectural ensembles, a symbiosis of professional urban planning analysis and triumphal Imperial rhetoric;
- main streets are treated as city focusing axis;
- there are a lot of decorative elements, embodying the socialist idea together with the national features of each country;
- Combination of residential housings + administration buildings + squares and boulevards with rich green zones.

Neoclassical triumphant architectural ensembles, a symbiosis of professional urban planning analysis and triumphal Imperial rhetoric



Minsk, Independence Av.



Berlin, Karl Marx Allee



Kiev, Kreshchatik



Marszałkowska ul.  
Warsaw



Moscow, Tverskaya ul.

There are a lot of decorative elements, embodying the socialist idea together with the national features of each country. MINSK



There are a lot of decorative elements, embodying the socialist idea together with the national features of each country. KIEV

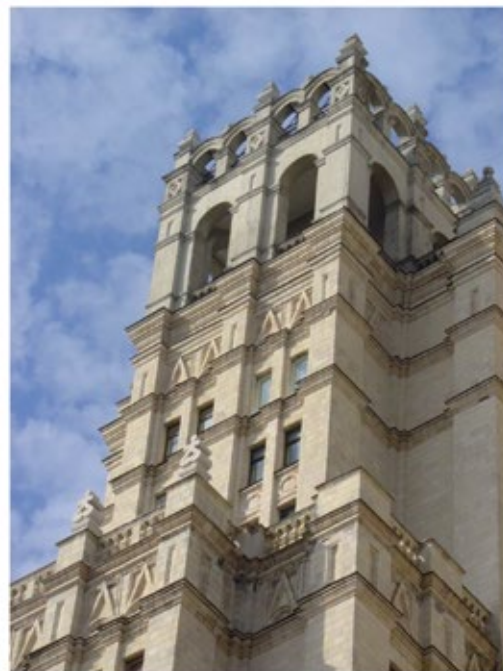




There are a lot of decorative elements, embodying the socialist idea together with the national features of each country. WARSAW



There are a lot of decorative elements, embodying the socialist idea together with the national features of each country. Moscow





There are a lot of decorative elements, embodying the socialist idea together with the national features of each country. Berlin



Combination of residential housings + administration buildings + squares and boulevards with rich green zones. Minsk



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## Marszałkowska Residential District MDM

Z. Stępiński, J. Knothe, J. Sigalin, St. Jankowski, 1949-53







Bundesarchiv, Bild 183-19119-0004  
Foto: Weisk, Günter 19. April 1953





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Cover of the ICOMOS publication “Socialist Realism and Socialist Modernism. World Heritage Proposals from Central and Eastern Europe”, 2013