

**REPORT ON THE STATE OF GOVERNANCE OF HERITAGE PROTECTION  
VALUES IN VILNIUS, LITHUANIA WITH SPECIAL FOCUS ON TWO  
PLANNING DOCUMENTS: “VILNIUS OLD TOWN PROTECTION  
REGULATION” AND “DRAFT DETAILED PLAN OF THE OLD TOWN OF  
VILNIUS”.**

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Members of the expert group**

**Helsinki and Bergen  
22th of December, 2004**

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This report is based on material sent to the experts and a visit to Vilnius 24<sup>th</sup> - 26<sup>th</sup> of November, 2004, organized by the Lithuanian National Commission for UNESCO under the leadership of Secretary General Asta Dirmaitė. The experts have been invited to do this mission by the Minister of Culture Roma Žakaitienė. Even though the time and resources to do this mission have been limited, the experts fully stand behind the conclusions and recommendations in this report. The additional comments and recommendations must be read as statements that are relevant to the background and challenges and tangible to the mandate of the mission.

## Mandate

The mandate given was to evaluate the drafted “Detailed Plan of the Old Town of Vilnius” as stated in the letter from the minister of Culture 2004-11-12.

The Historic Centre of Vilnius is a World Heritage Site inscribed on the World Heritage List in 1994. When inscribing the site on the List the Committee stated that Vilnius being the “political centre of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania from the 13th to the end of the 18th century, Vilnius has had a profound influence on the cultural and architectural development of much of eastern Europe. Despite invasions and partial destruction, it has preserved an impressive complex of Gothic, Renaissance, Baroque and classical buildings as well as its medieval layout and natural setting.”

We visited Vilnius on 24<sup>th</sup> - 26<sup>th</sup> of November. During this visit there were meetings arranged with the municipality, the ministry of culture, the Lithuanian national ICOMOS committee and NGOs. A sightseeing to important viewpoints to examine the state of the historic skyline in Old Vilnius and its buffer zone as well as in the core of Old Town was carried out on 25<sup>th</sup>.

Even though the information given at the meetings, and the material sent to us on beforehand the extension of the site and complexity of the challenges is so wide that we cannot present a complete evaluation. (To do so any engagement and stay on the site should be enlarged considerably). Comments and recommendations put forward are based upon our professional experience and competence on World Heritage conservation issues and urban planning methods.

We consider, however, that the draft detailed plan should not be seen as an isolated document, but as part of a development according to what we could observe and according to an established or rather establishing planning tradition. We have thus tried to observe the draft detail plan in a broader perspective. To do so we have organized the further parts of this report under the headlines of:

- Observations and impressions: That is impressions as a result of sight seeing and meetings in Vilnius and study of documents.
- Comments: This is reflections on our observations and impressions
- Conclusions: This is our main conclusions in accordance to our mandate
- Recommendations: This is recommended actions for improvements that should be taken in accordance to our mandate.
- Additional comments and recommendations: These are issues that are not strictly according to the mandate, but of relevance to the challenges described.

**Kommentaras [hjr1]:** Det får du vurdere om det har relevanse for våre anbefalinger, hvis ikke synes jeg ikke det bør tas med.

## Recommendations

- The expert group strongly recommends that:
- The integration of the Vilnius Old Town Protection Regulation and the Draft Detailed Plan of the Old Town of Vilnius must be clarified in terms of their formal legal positions and bodies responsible.
- The content and position of Vilnius Old Town as a World Heritage Site must be stressed according to the criteria the site was inscribed on the World Heritage List. The conservation and management of the site shall be seen in preserving its architectural, urban and natural values.
- The buffer zone of the site must be identified for protection of the architectural and urban values of the Vilnius Old Town.
- The responsibility of the State party, in this case the Ministry of Culture, for the implementation of the World Heritage Convention is strongly emphasized. The preservation and management of the Historic Centre of Vilnius are part of this responsibility.
- In order to improve the procedures for handling project plans the establishment of a board, with members of the Ministry of Culture, the Municipality and repr. of NGOs, is strongly recommended. This board can also invite professionals as external experts. For major projects Environmental Impact Assessments are required.
- The conservation and restoration activities shall be carried out using traditional materials and settings. Contemporary building techniques should be avoided. (Reference “Management Guidelines for World Heritage Sites.”)
- The illustrative materials of the Draft Detailed Plan of the Old Town of Vilnius shall be improved. This is important for making analysis and comparisons of conservation and development activities. The material is important when discussion the impact of the projects and in the general communication with the public.
- The level of punishment for breaking regulation rules in the old town should be brought into harmony with the impact of the loss of cultural values.

## **Examinations of documents, meeting with authorities and local actors, observations and impressions**

### ***Vilnius Old Town Protection Regulation (The protection regulation)***

This document presents a thorough description of the main compositions of the given property. It is relative short and precise. It gives credibility to the document that the authors and references are identifiable. Besides identifying the different valuable buildings and cluster of buildings, the document presents a precise description on silhouettes, panoramas and perspectives. The dynamic dimension of the old town is underlined as one of many characteristics of the townscape.

The agenda of describing the scope of the urban property referring to territories retaining authentic urban structures, territories with new urban structures etc. put authenticity and urban structures as key elements for understanding and monitoring the urban ensemble.

The “Cartogram of plan and volume structure” is convincingly identifying amongst others main historic tracts, dominant verticals and valuable development structures referring to different historic periods and not formed or destroyed development structures.

The general part of protection regulation identifies the objects involved and establishes the requirements for monitoring, use and management of old town elements. It puts further on focus on terms used, legal status, structure, size and other record data and purpose, structure and implementation of the protection regulation. The protection regulation establishes itself as a key document approved by the ministry of culture. We notice that it “shall be specified in the territorial planning documents by preparation conditions and in the list of design conditions of a building issued by the municipality” (VIII, 29).

Part one of the protection regulations contains general protection requirements and regulated activities within the old town. The general protections requirement organizes the management of the old town under the following regimes:

- ✓ Conservation / restoration
- ✓ Restoration
- ✓ Restoration / reconstruction

These regimes are cross organized with the use regimes of:

- ✓ Protected buildings
- ✓ Territorial elements (public spaces and squares)
- ✓ Green plantations

Together with other headlines such as valuable facades and contour of the protective wall, this establishes the legend for the mapping of valuable elements and parts of the old town. This map is a rather detailed map offering an identification of the basic heritage

protection elements within the urban site and a hierarchy of values within one common setting.

***Draft Detailed Plan of the Old Town of Vilnius (The detailed plan)***

The detailed plan is referring to a number of maps as “Drawing charts”. Among these we notice:

Annexe No. 5: Cartogram of the layout – volumetric structure (dossier of the urban heritage value)

Annexe No. 6 Cartogram of the spatial structure (dossier of the urban heritage value)

Annexe No. 9: Cartogram of the urban structure (dossier of the urban heritage value)

Annexe No. 10: Zoning map of the archeological layer (dossier of the urban heritage value)

Annexe No. 11 Area and zoning territory to be planned from the monument protection point of view (Vilnius Old Town Protection Regulation)

Annexe No. 13: Special Vilnius Old Town Protection Plan. Management regimes.

We experience the final map: The master drawing, as a formalized synthesis of the different annexes.

We notice that when dealing with legal basis (2.3), one refers to a nine resolutions, planning documents and decisions, but not to one general legal basis as, for instance, a “Planing- and Building Act”. Among the plans of reference is the Vilnius Old Town Protection Regulation.

We notice further on that there have been a number of public meetings and expositions as part of the planning process and public participation and that this expert evaluation is a part of the planning process.

It is stated, under the headline of: “PROTECTION OF THE URBAN HERITAGE VALUE”, that protection is governed by the Vilnius Old Town Protection Regulation and that the preparation of the detailed plan was carried out in accordance with the protection regulations. It is further on stated that the provisions of the protection regulations have been directly transported into the Building (Rebuilding) Works Regulations of the Old Town Detailed Plan Management.

The total territory of the plan is divided into 10 zones that differ according to a number of parameters such as historic development qualities, historic legal status, layout structure, character of development and esthetical expression etc. The different zones are described referring, amongst others, to dominating, but not total dominating, building structure morphologies.

Tendencies on land use conversion are described. It is pointed out that the overall conversion of the territory use type is essentially taking place in accordance with the use volumes allowed in the territory of individual sites. This means specifically territories of public properties and monuments that are structurally important for the city as a whole.

The goal for the draft use regime is, as we see it, to meet the needs of today and to minimize negative impacts on the authentic environment, by establishing a regime of functions and volumes as close to the existing and traditional features as possible.

In terms of land use policy, returning from almost any land use to the residential one is encouraged in order to preserve the “historic” residential designation. However, and in order to revive characteristic historic founded use, commercial functions are allowed at almost every building’s ground level.

Taking into account the Vilnius tradition of constant change and any city’s need for economic and social development, the introduction of new controlled architecture is considered an important mean for preserving and enriching the historic environment.

The draft plan seeks to implement the following guidelines:

- Sustaining heritage resources
- Supporting traditional functions
- Rebuilding lost heritage
- Encouraging folklore and crafts
- Stressing cultural resources from a multi-perspective

The historic plot boundaries are sought to be restored.

An estimation of the volumes of protection, rebuilding and controlled new building in different zones is presented.

Building heights are protected within the municipal and state registers of immovable cultural values and changes are only possible based on new research by modifying dossiers of values and regulations.

Heights of to-be-rebuilt buildings are not specified.

Some of the detailed plan solutions are not to be adopted by this planning document, but require further public and specialist discussions.

The process of value verification is a steadily ongoing process and decisions can be taken to change the detailed plan at any time upon receipt of new information on content and volume of the values and change of conditions.

It is stated that the urbanization process has so far not destroyed the values of the territory’s natural landscape.

To build engineering infrastructure across plots has been abandoned and should thus protect immovable cultural values located under ground.

It is acknowledged that the existing transportation system does not fully meet the needs for citizens and tourists and has a negative impact on the historic environment. Some general actions for improvements are suggested. One is the need for car parking in the old town nucleus zone, which requires building of communal use car parks in the approaches to the old town and clearing old town spaces for pedestrians.

Different morphology types – typologies of development of urban structures is described and linked to territory development type, height, plot development percentage, peculiarities (sketch) and a description. A “Special Vilnius Old Town Protection Plan” is part of the draft detailed plan. An inventory of immovable cultural values has been taken by inter-institutional agreement, integrating the state registry into the draft plan by the city council in 2004.

A visual protection zone as a buffer zone is under preparation.

All areas within the draft plan have been given a priority type of territory use. All areas are also given a matrix describing number of levels, development density and morphology. Large areas within the building structures are given the position as “rights-of-way in plots”.

### ***Meetings with the municipality of Vilnius and the Division for Heritage Protection at the Ministry of Culture.***

The meeting with the municipality of Vilnius took place in the recently built Town Hall of Vilnius under the chairmanship of Ms Dalia Bardauskiene, advisor to the Mayor. Some 30 persons representing the state authorities and the municipality attended the meeting. There were presentations on the drafted detail plan from planning experts. A number of questions were raised, those on the archaeological layers in the town, the building density in the drafted plan compared to the present situation, the concern for the “green” areas within the Old Town etc. There were also discussions on the terminology of restoration – reconstruction, which used in the drafted town plan does not correspond to the terms used internationally.

The meeting with the state authorities under the chairmanship of Ms. Irma Grigaitienė, Head of the Department, raised the question of the importance of the state party (The Government and Parliament of Lithuania) in the implementation of the World Heritage Convention. The preservation, conservation and management of historic centre of Vilnius are not only a matter of the municipality, but the responsibility of the state authorities, as well. Co-operation between the municipality, state authorities and NGOs was strongly emphasized.

### ***Meeting with the Nongovernmental Commission of the Old Town (The NGO)***

The NGO claimed that the old town is undergoing severe alterations, alterations that are non-consistent and incompatible with the requirements of Vilnius’ position as a World Heritage site. These alterations are tolerated by the state and municipality authorities.. In

the last several years a number of voluminous buildings of excessive height have been constructed and it was declared that the draft detailed plan will lead to enlargement of the scale of new constructions and decrease of the city's historical authentic values.

These declarations were illustrated by examples among which were the nine-story hotel "Novotel", the "recreation" the "Jewish Quarter" demolishing valuable archeological findings, findings that were not properly documented. Increasing usage of contemporary materials and technologies applied on historic buildings unfamiliar to authenticity requirements.

The impact of planned projects will lead to a remodeling of the city covering about 30 percent of the old town territory.

It was mentioned that the dimensions of a penalty for breaking the regulation laws in the old town is not larger than it can easily be calculated into an ordinary project budget.

The expert group was asked by the NGO to evaluate the draft detailed plan and the old town protection plan seen in the light of the World Heritage standards and to evaluate the changes the old town has undergone seen in the light of the authenticity test of 1994. These tasks are most relevant, but go far beyond the mandate and the capacity of the mission of the expert group.

#### ***Meeting with the Lithuanian National ICOMOS Committee (The national committee)***

The meeting took place in an open-minded atmosphere. The national committee mentioned a number of general weaknesses concerning the standards of the existing planning documents. However, no dominating weakness of the protection regulations and the draft detailed plan were put forward.

It was on the other hand mentioned that the main issue is not the standard of planning documents, but how each and every project is handled. (The appendix – photos taken during the sightseeing)

#### ***Visiting the old town***

A sightseeing was arranged within and around the old town. The old town was observed from important sites of view and attention was paid to the sky-scrapers that are being erected near the old town. Many of the sites mentioned by the NGO were visited. (The appendix – photos taken during the sightseeing)

## **Comments**

The state authorities of Lithuania and the municipal authorities of Vilnius have in recent years produced a considerable and impressive amount of planning documents and resolutions addressing the old town of Vilnius. Seen in the light of Lithuania, being in the



process of a transition economy, this planning activity must be regarded as a process towards a new regime of city governance and further on a search for an optimal balance between development and protection and between private and public rights and responsibilities. This striving for instruments for optimal balanced environmental governance is common for most European countries and cities, but, for many reasons, more difficult and challenging in a transition country such as Lithuania. What makes the Vilnius case even more delicate than most cases is that it is inscribed on the World Heritage List and at the same time must act as a living urban site. Seen in this perspective, the dimension of the World Heritage territory must be regarded as very large.

The Vilnius Old Town Protection Regulations gives the impression of a thoroughly worked document. We presuppose that the three main levels of management regimes, conservation / restoration – restoration – restoration / reconstruction, reflect a well-documented strategy on heritage protection and is a prolonging of the tradition established within the regime of the regeneration planning documents. The protection regulations, as they appear, should form a well-documented basis for a long term and a day-to-day management of the old town as an urban heritage protection site.

What we miss, however, is a clearer definition or translation of the criteria that has brought the old town to its position of a World Heritage site. This lack of preciseness between inscription criteria and manageable value definition is not unique for Vilnius, but a common challenge for many World Heritage sites. This does not mean that the actual management regime is not strong or strict enough, but not precise enough. The World Heritage value regime should be as precise and limited as possible and should be concretized into structures and objects that shall form the basis for the long-term development of the old town. As representing World Heritage values they should not be negotiable in terms of project development negotiations.

As for the protection regulation, the Draft Detailed Plan of the Old Town of Vilnius presents itself as a thorough worked document. The number and content of the drawing charts presented as annexes is impressive and the reference to other relevant resolutions and planning document seems most adequate and should be satisfactory.

We notice, with satisfaction, that efforts have been made in order to create a dialogue with the partners involved as part of the planning process. We have no information on whether this dialogues have been fruitful or not, but we must underline that a positive and constructive attitude amongst all partners involved is a condition for a fruitful dialogue. We observe, however, that it is a considerable gap between the state of art described by the NGO and the municipality. We would like to add that, in order to establish a positive atmosphere as part of a dialogue on planning efforts, it is our experiences that it is fruitful to have a thorough debate and to search for consensus on some basic assumption for planning activities at forehand of the design of any draft plan. Such assumptions can be the challenges the city is facing, the goal for the planning activities, a cognitive description of the physical structures and standards of urban site as a phenomenon, possibilities and limitations within the existing legal instruments etc. etc.

As it is stated that the preparation of the detailed plan was carried out in accordance with the protection regulations, and it is mentioned that the provisions of the protection plan have been directly transformed into the Building Works Regulations. If so, and literary speaking, heritage protection interests should be in place according to its own premises.

It is, however, a bit unclear how the main documents, the protection regulations and the draft detailed plan are supposed to integrate, to work together. Seen from the citizens' point of view there should be one main document that represents the judicial binding management regime of the old town. If there are others, they should be clearly identifiable as sub documents to the main document and their positions as legal instruments should be made as clear as possible.

It is also a bit unclear for us how the responsible for the monitoring of the World Heritage values, which is the state representatives by the ministry of culture, or those who has been authorized by the ministry, are brought into the procedure of project evaluations.

Looking at the legend of the draft detailed plan its main purposes is, as we see it, to control land use policy and to establish a framework for new constructions. The aspect of heritage protection seems to be dealt with elsewhere. When it comes to land use policy we have no comments. When it comes to the draft detail plan as a framework for new constructions, we have some comments or questions. The numbers of new constructions should, at a starting point, be very limited, being within a heritage protection zone. We notice that efforts have been made in order to identify different building morphologies within the old town. These are, however, very schematic and awkward illustrated, and we wonder how these will function in terms of practical policy. Further on, we notice the use of the parameter of density. We wonder, what will be gained by the use of the parameter of density in a site already built? What qualities will density represent beside the other quality parameters and what will happen when there conflicts will occur between the different parameters, will building heights be more important than for instance density?

By and large we would like to see the consequences of the different parameters represented as minimized numbers within a very large map much better illustrated before it is possible for us, and we suppose for others as well, to be able to judge the impact on old Vilnius as an urban site.

This lack of communication illustrations on consequences effects development as well. We observe that the protection regulations underlines Vilnius the dynamic dimension of the old town characteristics and that the draft detailed plan the need for economic and social development and the introduction of new controlled architecture in order to enrich the historic environment. We fully support these attitudes. Generally speaking, by neglecting the need for development both development and heritage protection will suffer. However, we do miss convincing illustration materials that document or indicate how and where such development should or could take place and where conflicting interests with heritage protection will or could appear.

We must add that it is rather unusual to create such a large detailed plan for an area as the old town. We all know that such large detailed plans have not the capacity or robustness to stay unchanged. To choose a large detailed plan as a management tool means that the procedures for alterations must be clear and advanced. What is regarded a serious and a less serious alteration of the plans provisions and which departments are to be activated in the different cases? We have not been able to look into this matter, but we mention it as an important one.

Comparing the visions of the protection regulations and the draft detailed plan with the statements of the NGO, we observed, as mentioned, a considerable gap between the NGO and the municipality concerning the description of the state of art of the old town. It is, for many reasons, impossible for us to fully meet the expectations from the NGO. It is, further on, not unusual that NGOs present strong messages according to their interests. However, we had the opportunity to observe some of the sites the NGO mentioned as interesting cases. We fully agree that the use of modern materials as we observed in many cases in building restoration is not according to ordinary heritage protection standard, not to mention World Heritage standards. We observed the hotel “Novotel” and we must seriously question the dimensions of this construction. We saw the reminiscences of the archeological structures of the “Jewish Quarter” and we must seriously question if this was in accordance with the protection regulations of the old town’s archeological layers. We consider these observations and cases as suffusion for a statement within our mandate.

## Conclusions

The state and municipal authorities of Vilnius have in recent years produced a considerable and impressing amount of high quality planning documents and resolutions addressing the old town of Vilnius. It is further on very positive that the municipality authority puts efforts on public discussions and participation including this mission. The process for city planning is in general a very challenging one and in for many reasons in Vilnius more challenging then in most other large cities.

We have, however, observed some cases of alterations and constructions that seem not to be in accordance with World Heritage, or even ordinary heritage protection standards. We presuppose that a basic legal framework of the protection of the old town has been in place since the inscription of the old town on the World Heritage list and even earlier and during the treatment of these cases. We seriously question how this can happen.

We were asked to put our main attention on the draft detailed plan. We have, however, raised questions on how the protection regulations is integrated or work together with the draft detailed plan in terms of its content and procedures involving state authorities. We have as well mentioned some challenging aspects with the draft detailed plan as for instance the need for a much better illustration of its impacts on the historic environment and its potential for improvements and development.

The draft detailed plan is, however, a draft plan. The unfortunate alterations and constructions we observed as cases is not effected by the draft detailed plan and should have been managed according to existing protection resolutions and regulations. This leads us to our main conclusion that the main contemporary challenge in Vilnius seems not to be the standards of the management tolls, but to how the projects are handled. This is not a professional, but a political challenge, but with environmental consequences.

There seems to be an unbalance between the ambitions of the public legal instruments concerning the implementation of existing laws and provisions addressing the world heritage site of Vilnius and the impact of breaking these laws. The volume of a penalty is not larger then it can easily be calculated into an ordinary project budget, which by no means should be acceptable.

## Additional comments

### **General background**

Most large cities in Europe experience fundamental changes in their economy and their positions as driving forces in the society as a result of an increasing internationalization of the economy. This change in economy often leads to changes in functions within large city areas and, as a result, physical transformations of strategically important areas. The old city core finds itself both in a challenging and vulnerable position striving to maintain its central position in the urban environment and as bearer of cultural testimonies and values. Beside the awareness of historic values a slogan as “The creative city” is one of many headlines on the agenda of urban discussions at the moment. In general the urban issue is widely discussed among politicians and professionals world wide seeking different philosophies and models for city management in order to obtain an optimal balance between development and protection. In order to reach such an optimal balance new models for urban governance is discussed and implemented, sometimes as trial and error, sometimes as a radical shift of governance system and philosophy, and sometimes as a step-by-step alteration and improvement of the existing models of governance. In a post-modern world no ideal solutions or models is offered on the market. It is, more then ever, up to the State party and the actual city to search their model for urban governance. This puts all State parties and larger cities in very challenging positions.

Seen in this perspective, Vilnius finds itself in a position similar to many European cities searching for its optimal balance between development and protection and its model for urban governance. What makes the position of Vilnius more challenging then most other cities is the matter of facts that the old Vilnius is inscribed on UNESCOs World Heritage List and, at the same time, undergoing a fundamental change of national and local economy and model and philosophy of governance. In addition, the territory in Vilnius inscribed on the WH-list must be regarded as very large taking into consideration that this is a city that shall and must obtain its position as a living city.

It must be underlined that it is the State party of Lithuania that has taken the initiative to inscribe Vilnius on the WH-list and it is the State party that is reporting to UNESCO on the state of art of any WH-site. At the same time, it is a general ongoing tendency of decentralization of rights and responsibility from the state to the municipal level in most countries. This tendency makes an evaluation of Vilnius as a WH-site even more delicate.

Considering traditions and management the city of Vilnius has in modern times been governed by regeneration plans. The so far three regeneration plans have been the main governing document for old Vilnius. The regeneration plan is an integrated planning document containing all main maps of importance. The tradition of regeneration plan is now replaced by two separate documents the “Vilnius Old Town Protection Regulation” (the protection regulation) approve by the Minister of Culture the 23<sup>rd</sup> of December 2003 and the “Detailed Plan of the Old Town of Vilnius” (the draft detailed plan) designed by the municipal of Vilnius.

Komentaras [hjr2]: Kan den stå her?

Beside the two mentioned plans the municipality of Vilnius has produced several relevant planning documents in recent years such as:

- Vilnius City Strategic Plan 2002-2011, an ambitious cross-sectorial plan built on clear priorities and acknowledging the main strengths and weaknesses of society.
- Vilnius old town revitalization 1998-2003, giving priority to development, renovation, improvement and conservation activities.

In addition information material on conservation guidelines and investors guidelines have been produced.

### ***Additional recommendations***

A most needed rising of standards in the old towns of the Baltic capitals seems to have started a bit later in Vilnius than in Riga and Tallinn, but when it came, the speed of change is very fast. If this speed of change continues, the atmosphere of the old town could be considerably altered within few years ahead.

There seems to be a big frustration within the NGO supporting the old town historic environment claiming that the municipality is not managing the old town due to its standards of an historic environment due to lack of information and co-operation. The NGO seemed frustrated as there is no body to which they can appeal on procedures on which they claim is not trustful.

The expert group was confronted with a number of conflicting statements and assertions. It is impossible for the expert group to investigate all these statements. However, the impression is that there is a general need to improve the standards of information and the climate on dialogues between the partners involved.

There seems to be an unclear division on rights and responsibilities on Vilnius as a world heritage site between the municipality and the ministry of culture. Seen from an UNESCO perspective the world heritage site is a State and ministry responsibility.

There seems to be a tendency of new skyscrapers being erected close to the old town and a lack on a thorough environmental impact analysis on this matter.

The ongoing reconstruction of the castle, as a replica without any documented prototype, is reducing the standard of old Vilnius town as an authentic urban ensemble.

The Baltic and the Nordic State parties implemented a project called Sustainable Historic Cities (The SHC project) between 1997 and 2000 under the leadership of the Nordic World Heritage Office in Oslo. Lithuania was a member of the SHC Project Advisory Group. As part of the SHC process, some of the Baltic partners asked for a Nordic model to replace the former Soviet Union model of centralistic governance. The answer was that there is no thing as a Nordic model in terms of a static and fixed model. A Nordic model can be recognized as a model that is able to organize democratic processes for decision

making and a model that is able to gain wisdom from these processes in order to reform and refine the system of governance. The governance of the Vilnius is now at a critical stage of development where the volume of new experiences will be considerable for years to come. It is naive to presuppose that no mistakes will be done. Acknowledging a mistake is the most valuable experience there is in order to be able to learn from experience and to implement reforms. In such a stage of fast development it is utmost important to create both bodies and a trustful atmosphere around planning and decision making.

We were told that the draft detail plan is a result of a competition between consultants offering their services for best prize.

In order to gain proper experiences, there must be a stable and highly skilled staff at place managing such a complex and challenging object such as the old town of Vilnius. Planning the old town should not be an ad hoc event but rather a continuing process. The professional staff of managing the old town of Vilnius must have quantity and quality standards as to design, revise and communicate the basic documents for the governance of the old town.

In order to establish trustful processes the quality of information has already been mentioned. However, in any system of governance rules and provisions are broken in one way or another. When someone claims that decision making is not going by the book there should be an independent body to which the partners involved could raise their claims. Without such a body and atmosphere of mutual suspicions could be established and nourished. In the Nordic countries such a body is at place as a local civil and state serviceman, an ombudsman, to which one can appeal after final decision is made and who has the power to set aside decisions if the process has not been in accordance with the established rules. The state of Lithuania should seriously consider establishing such an ombudsman.

## Appendixes

### *Mission Time Table*

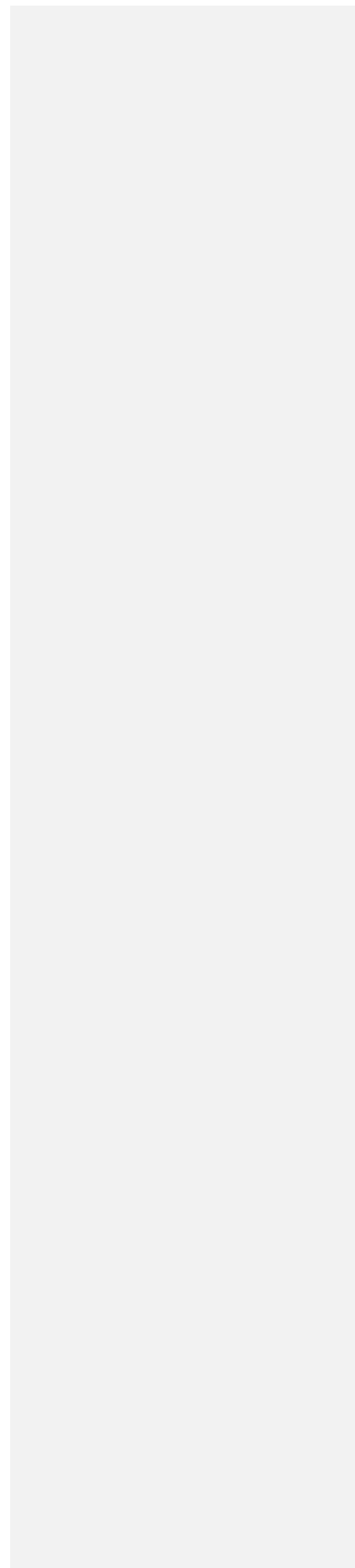
#### **24-26 November 2004, Vilnius, Lithuania**

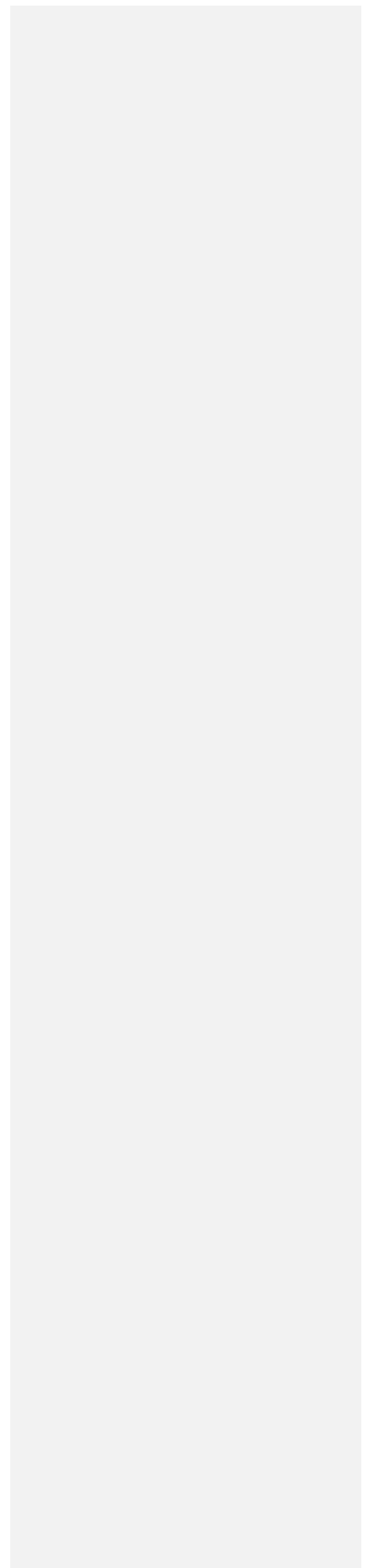
<b>24 November, Wednesday:</b>	Arrival in Vilnius airport.
17.40	Margaretha Ehrstrom : TE 0137 in Vilnius
17.15	Hans - Jacob Roald : from Bergen, SK 1742 in Vilnius
18.0	Checking in at the "Shakespeare" Hotel, <i>Bernardinų 8/8, Tel. +370 5 266 58 85</i>
18.30-19.30	Meeting with the Nongovernmental Commission of the Old Town of Vilnius at the Lithuanian National Commission for UNESCO, <i>Šv Jono 11</i>
20.00-21.30	Dinner together with the Aid to the President of the Republic of Lithuania for Culture Irena Vaišvilaitė, Secretary General Asta Dirmaitė, Programme Manager of the Secretariat Danguolė Reikaitė
<b>25 November, Thursday:</b>	
8.00-13.00	Visiting Old Town, selected sites and cultural heritage values, view points, accompanied by Asta Dirmaitė, Danguolė Reikaitė
13.00-14.30	Lunch. In the company of Ambassador Ina Marčiulionytė, Asta Dirmaitė, Danguolė Reikaitė
15.00-16.20	Meeting with the representatives of Vilnius Municipality, <i>Konstitucijos pr. 3</i>
16.30-17.30	Meeting with the representatives of Department of Cultural Heritage Protection. <i>Šnipiškų 3</i>
18.00-19.30	Meeting with the Lithuanian experts, members of the Lithuanian National ICOMOS Committee, <i>Universiteto 4</i>
<b>26 November, Friday:</b>	
8.00 till Lunch	Under experts' consideration (to be discussed yet upon arrival in Vilnius)
12.00-13.30	or :
13.00-14.30	Meeting with the Ambassador Ina Marčiulionytė, Asta Dirmaitė, Danguolė Reikaitė at the Lithuanian National Commission for UNESCO, <i>Šv Jono 11</i>



15.30 Departure to the airport

*Photos taken during the sightseeing*





***“Sustainable Historic Cities? A Baltic – Nordic Approach”, Nordic World Heritage Office, 2000***