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INTEGRATED AND REGIONAL
APPROACH ON DISSONANT
HERITAGE

Action 10

Integrated approaches to Dissonant Heritage



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1) Who we Are

Action Leaders - Germany

- **Jan Schultheiß**, German Federal Ministry for Housing, Urban Development and Building (BMWSB), Action Lead
- **Birgit Kann**, German Federal Institute for Research on Building, Urban Affairs and Spatial Development (BBSR), Project Lead associated research project

Partners within the Partnership on Culture and Cultural Heritage

- **Mario Aymerich**, European Investment Bank Institute
- **Georgi Stoev**, City of Kazanlak
- **Tsjalling Wierdsma**, City of Amsterdam, Dutch Federation of Cultural Heritage Cities

Action Group Members (as of June 2022)

- **Prof. Dr. Riin Alatalu**, Vice president of ICOMOS
- **Dr. Gruia Bădescu**, Department of History and Sociology, University of Konstanz
- **Jadé Botha**, EuroClio Inspiring History and Citizenship Educators
- **Adrianna Brechelke**, Institute of Architecture and Spatial Planning, Poznań University of Technology
- **Ed Carroll**, Faro Convention Network
- **Ricard Conesa Sánchez**, University of Barcelona, European Observatory on Memories EUROM
- **Almudena Cruz**, Spain's Ministry for the Presidency, Parliamentary Relations and Democratic Memory
- **Rafaël Deroo**, European Federation of Fortified Sites EFFORTS Europe
- **Dr.-Ing. Claus-Peter Echter**, President ICOMOS CIVVIH, Council Member Europa Nostra
- **Prof. Dr. hab. Hanna Grzeszczuk-Brendel**, Faculty of Architecture, Poznań University of Technology
- **Prof. Dr. Jörg Haspel**, ICOMOS Germany
- **Prof. Dr.-Ing. Carola Hein**, Chair History of Architecture and Urban Planning, Delft University of Technology
- **Dora Ivanova**, Buzludzha Project Foundation
- **Prof. Dr. Alexandre Kostka**, Faculty of Languages and Applied Human Sciences, University of Strasbourg
- **Prof. Dr. Tuuli Lähdesmäki**, Department of Music, Art and Culture Studies, University of Jyväskylä
- **Prof. Dr. John Patrick Leech**, Department of Interpreting and Translation, University of Bologna
- **Prof. Dr. Carolina Rodríguez-López**, Department of Modern and Contemporary History, Complutense University of Madrid
- *And many other contributors*

Research Team

- **Nils Scheffler**, Urban Expert
- **Dr Petra Potz**, location³ Wissenstransfer [*Knowledge Transfer*]
- **Sally Below, Sarah Reiche** (& Amelie Schulz until spring 2022), sbca

The work process in this **action** takes place at different levels:

1. Action Leadership

The Action Lead is carried out by the BMWWSB in cooperation with the BBSR. The Action Leaders have designed the main working modules for the action and coordinate and communicate the process.

2. Action Group

The interdisciplinary Action Group of European experts gives strategic guidance on the key topics of the action's development and provides feedback for the action's implementation. Regular meetings of the action group help to deepen and elaborate key findings within the action.

3. Research Project (ExWoSt) “Integrated approaches to Dissonant Heritage in Europe”

Furthermore, the BBSR commissioned an interdisciplinary consortium of German scientists and experts, hereafter referred to as the “research team”, to accompany the action and elaborate the results in a research project from April 2021 to October 2022. The research project is part of the Experimental Housing and Urban Development funding program (ExWoSt) at the BBSR.

The research team works closely with and supports the Action Group through its scientific work and organizational activities. In return, the Action Group supports the work of the research team by commenting on and validating the results and the scientific approach within the research project.

The following texts were developed in the above-mentioned research project, see also <https://www.bbsr.bund.de/BBSR/EN/research/programs/ExWoSt/FieldsOfResearch/dissonant-heritage/01-start.html>.



Overview of the stakeholders involved in the context of the research project and the Action Group © Urban Expert/ location³



International Expert Workshop of Action Group 10 and research team, Barcelona, La Model prison, October 2021. © Teresa Estrada

2) Background and context

Dissonant heritage is part of European history and cultural heritage. This heritage can include places related to National-Socialist, fascist, nationalist or communist regimes and state systems, as well as places that reveal structural evidence of war, persecution, or colonisation. Much of Europe's most striking post-war modern architecture and urban planning can also count as part of Europe's dissonant architectural heritage.

'Dissonant' is not to be understood as a property inherent in any specific heritage site, but rather as a symptom that arises against a complex background of social, political and historical conditions. Such conditions may lead a society or social group to associate particular cultural or architectural heritage with negative or unpleasant memories. The site thus becomes politically and/or historically burdened; in other words, it becomes dissonant. Accordingly, dissonant heritage captures the controversies and conflicts in competing and sometimes ambiguous readings of the past.

Exploring the potential of dissonant heritage

Dissonant heritage sites provide important structural evidence of the complexity and sometimes controversial nature of European history and cultural heritage. They are central to the culture of remembrance as places where European history and the diverse narratives and perspectives it inspires can be experienced. They allow or call for new and changing insights and questions about our history. They encourage a critical examination of our past in order to strengthen democratic cohesion. Despite all historical, practical and even emotional challenges, the potential of dissonant heritage is rich and broad – for society, urban and regional development, cultural tourism and education, to name just a few. For instance:

- They can help make historic events tangible and understandable. By showing us how authoritarian systems used architecture symbolically for the exercise of power, they allow us to learn from the past, ultimately strengthening our democratic social systems (democratic and educational function).
- On-site confrontation can also help groups affected by discrimination, stigmatisation or persecution process and remember what happened (memory function).
- Such places can and should also be used for social dialogue and discussion, to build bridges and to reunite alienated or even hostile social groups or countries (socio-political function).
- Dissonant heritage can also take on an economic function as a destination for (cultural) tourism, bringing people to new locations.
- Within the framework of an interdisciplinary and cross-level integrated approach, heritage with urban spatial references can take on an important *function in inventory-oriented urban and regional development*.

Despite this rich potential, dissonant heritage sites in many parts of Europe do not receive sufficient public attention or support. They are neglected, not accessible to the public, or threatened by demolition and decay. Historic buildings and areas are often not under protection, and deemed unworthy of preservation to many of those involved, partly because of the unpleasant associations. There is often an urgent need for action to secure, preserve and develop these historic building structures in a way that is fit for the future.

A need for integrated approaches

Acknowledging the architectural heritage and historical significance of dissonant heritage across Europe, and activating its full potential, requires a sensitive, careful and integrated approach that involves a variety of multiple actors:

The interpretation of our dissonant past is a complex yet worthwhile task that requires continuous reflection on the pillars of our contemporary democratic society and broad and integrated approaches that involve all relevant stakeholders and sectors and that relate the heritage to urban development can unveil and develop the potential of dissonant heritage and capture its historical significance.

These integrated approaches not only include cross-sector activities but also outline a broader definition of

- different layers, values and perspectives of heritage;
- different disciplinary connections: heritage studies, cultural policies, social and public history, ethnography, anthropology, political science, planning, architecture, sociology, community-led development, pedagogy, etc.;
- different fields of heritage action: protection, research, museums, documentation, management, education;
- different spheres of actors concerned with heritage: public, private, civic;
- different levels of action: local, regional, national, European and international.

3) Objectives

Focus on integrated approaches, 20th-century dissonant heritage and smaller cities and remote areas

In the spirit of the Urban Agenda for the EU (UAEU), the Action aims to test and develop new and innovative approaches to urban issues, which ultimately form the basis for recommendations for action by the European Commission.

The Action`s main aims are:

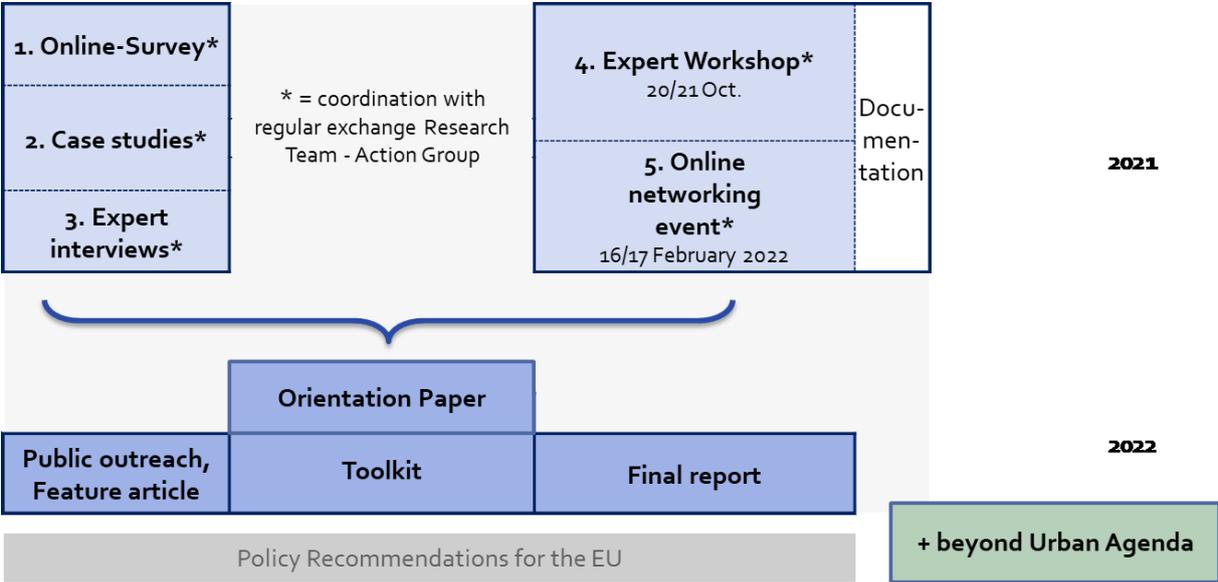
- The Action aims to integrate this dissonant heritage more closely with sustainable **urban and regional development** and thus to ensure its conservation and viable as well as sustainable development. Another objective of the Action is to promote better use of the potential of the heritage for purposes such as education on history, strengthening democracy and the development of tourism.
- The aim of Action 10 is furthermore to increase awareness of the value and potential especially of dissonant heritage in Europe dating from the **20th century**, when most European countries experienced radical political transformation, totalitarian regimes, or dictatorships and wars, raising questions about national identity as well as political and cultural borders. Throughout Europe, dissonant heritage sites with buildings and ensembles of cultural significance represent this multi-layered and controversial history of the 20th century. Among them are heritage sites associated with National Socialist, Fascist, nationalist or socialist regimes and state systems as well as places and structural evidence of war, persecution, colonisation or propaganda. In addition, architecturally striking buildings and ensembles of post-war modernism are often also perceived as “difficult” or “dissonant”. The Action aims to promote better use of this potential and these opportunities of dissonant heritage for purposes such as education in history and democracy and the development of tourism.
- In addition, the Action focuses on exploring the specific framework conditions, such as local budgets, personnel, access, and tourism, in **smaller cities and remote regions in Europe dealing with dissonant heritage sites**. The Action considers their similar and differing circumstances and strategic approaches as compared to large cities, which present both challenges and opportunities. Consequently, Action 10 pays special attention to the situation of sites and monuments in smaller and peripheral places throughout Europe in order to explore what kind of public and political attention and support these heritage sites require to fulfil their important function of strengthening democracy and urban and regional development.
- The Action also aims to focus on **lesser known and less developed/explored dissonant heritage sites**, where the Action could have an impact and support local activities. It thus chose to leave out internationally known examples of dissonant heritage, such as Auschwitz, the Nazi Party Rally Grounds in Nuremberg, the Victory Monument in Bolzano and the Mostar Bridge. Nevertheless, many of these places, too, face questions about their future development and require increased attention and support.

In order to raise awareness and to develop strategies for these dissonant heritage sites, Action No. 10 poses and aims to answer some key questions, among them:

- How to deal with these historically, architecturally and culturally significant, multi-layered, often controversial and/or emotionally charged heritage sites?
- How can integrated approaches be used to develop and make use of their potential?
- How can these sites be protected and made more relevant for people today and tomorrow?
- What conclusions can be drawn for other heritage sites from the reflections, good practices and lessons learned?

In summary, the Action aims to investigate how integrated approaches can be used to develop and harness the potential of dissonant heritage for society, urban and regional development and (cultural) tourism. The Action’s aim is to identify and demonstrate approaches, strategies and solutions for dealing with dissonant heritage and its sustainable development and use in different (socio-) spatial contexts and European countries. In doing so, both the relevant stakeholders to be involved and the appropriate instruments, methods and procedures are to be considered.

4) Results and main outcomes



Action’s outputs © Urban Expert, location³

Knowledge base - milestones and results of the empirical study



- | | |
|--|---|
| 1 Adolf Hitler's birthplace, Braunau, Austria | 21 Historical Olympic Village of 1936, Wustermark |
| 2 Concentration Camp Memorial Ebensee, Austria | 22 Memorial site of former labour camp Neuaubing, Munich, Germany |
| 3 Atlantikwall Raversyde, Oostende, Belgium | 23 Peenemünde Test Centre, Germany |
| 4 Colonial symbols in public spaces, Brussels capital region, Belgium | 24 Planned city Eisenhüttenstadt, Germany |
| 5 Decolonising public space: statue of King Leopold II of Belgium at the historic city hall, Leuven, Belgium | 25 Remembrance, education and meeting centre, Alt Rehse, Germany |
| 6 Monument House of the Bulgarian Communist Party - Buzludzha, Kazanlak, Bulgaria | 26 Saaleck Workshops, Saaleck, Germany |
| 7 Neoclassical type architecture, Dimitrovgrad, Bulgaria | 27 Stasi Headquarters. Campus for Democracy, Berlin, Germany |
| 8 Jasenovac Concentration Camp Memorial Site, Croatia | 28 Vogelsang IP (Internationaler Platz), Schleiden, Germany |
| 9 Ustasha Concentration Camp Slana, Island of Pag, Croatia | 29 Dunaujváros downtown and Technikum district, Hungary |
| 10 The Green Line, United Nations Buffer Zone, Cyprus | 30 Historic centre built during the Fascist dictatorship, Forlì, Italy |
| 11 City Hall, Tallinn, Estonia | 31 Permanent exhibition within the Monument of Victory, Bolzano, Italy |
| 12 Concentration Camp Natzweiler-Struthof, France and its secondary camps in Germany | 32 9th Fort in Kaunas, Lithuania |
| 13 Martyr village, Oradour-sur-Glane, France | 33 Central Post Office Skopje, North Macedonia |
| 14 Museums of the History of the Great War, Peronne/Thiepval, France | 34 Maze Long Kesh, Lisburn, Northern Ireland |
| 15 Rivesaltes Camp Memorial, France | 35 Nowa Huta, Kraków, Poland |
| 16 Shoah Memorial, Paris/Drancy, France | 36 Imperial District, Poznań, Poland |
| 17 Borderland Museum, Eichsfeld, Germany | 37 Memorial to the Victims of Communism and the Resistance, Sighet, Romania |
| 18 Buchenwald Memorial and Mittelbau-Dora Concentration Camp Memorial, Germany | 38 Soviet Socialist architecture and urbanism, Stei, Romania |
| 19 Central Animal Laboratories of the Freie Universität Berlin ("Mice bunker"), Germany | 39 La Model, Barcelona, Spain |
| 20 Great goat mountain, Ballenstedt, Germany | 40 Sites and objects, Chernobyl Zone, Ukraine |
| | 41 Valley of the Fallen, El Escorial, Spain |

In order to gain insights into integrated approaches to dealing with dissonant heritage in small towns and peripheral regions in Europe, the research team conducted an **online survey** of 40 heritage sites, eleven **case studies** (individual and group interviews with more than 40 local actors) and **interviews with ten international experts**.

This variety of methods yielded diverse insights. The dissonant heritage sites examined cover a very broad spectrum of locations and types, which in turn are in different phases of development. What all these places have in common, however, is their (potential) importance and function as places of enlightenment, remembrance and debate, ultimately strengthening democratic processes.

The survey emphasises that this function can be particularly supported via integrated approaches such as the following:

- Through increased and coordinated cooperation at the local, regional and national level. The actors contribute their respective resources in order to preserve and cultivate dissonant heritage and to develop it into places of enlightenment, remembrance and public debate;

- By intensifying networking and cooperation at the European level to advance dissonant heritage and integrated approaches locally. The European dimension enables a 'different' view of one's own dissonant heritage. It also facilitates a learning process, exposing different attitudes to dissonant heritage;
- By linking dissonant heritage to other sectors and areas such as education, tourism, culture, and community engagement. This enlarges the debate on dissonant heritage from different perspectives and enables the involvement of a larger group of stakeholders in the integrated development of dissonant heritage sites. It also allows heritage sites to tap into further support and potential funding.

International expert workshop, Barcelona, 20 to 22 October 2021



Guided tour of La Model, Barcelona, Spain, a prison of political dissidents during Franco's dictatorship © Jan Schultheiß

The two-day expert workshop brought together experts from Action Group 10 and international experts to exchange knowledge and share experience.

The hybrid event took place in the former prison 'La Modelo' and at the University of Barcelona, as well as digitally. Around 45 participants came together. The aim of the event was firstly to reflect on the results of the empirical study (orientation paper) with the members

of the Action Group and an extended group of experts, and secondly, to jointly debate and further develop recommendations for integrated approaches in dealing with dissonant heritage.

Dr. Petra Potz, Nils Scheffler

Integrated Approaches to Dissonant Heritage of the 20th Century

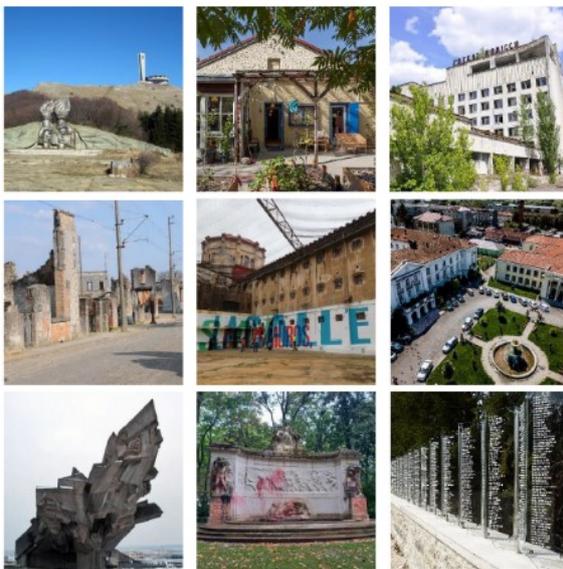
with a focus on smaller towns and remote areas in Europe

Orientation Paper

in the context of the Experimental Housing and Urban Development (ExWoSt) Programme and Action 10 of the Partnership on Culture and Cultural Heritage in the Urban Agenda for the EU

Orientation Paper

The Orientation Paper summarizes the results of the empirical study and the expert workshop ([link](#)).



Online Forum (16 and 17 February 2022)

The Online Forum brought together around 200 international experts, researchers and local practitioners from more than 20 countries. The digital event offered the opportunity for networking and exchanging ideas on how to deal with dissonant heritage in Europe at different levels and disciplines and in various fields of action.

As an essential element of the project, the Online Forum aimed to raise awareness of European networks, initiatives and associations on the above-mentioned topic. The interim results of the research project were brought up for discussion based on an 'orientation paper'. In addition, numerous presentations and discussions provided a framework for exchanging good practical experiences and ideas - for instance at an online marketplace, at which various projects from all over Europe presented themselves. The documentation of the workshop will be provided on the project website of the BBSR.

Toolbox (scheduled to be published in 2025)

The project results point to a particular need of knowledge transfer how to deal with and start addressing dissonant heritage from a multi-vocal perspective, how to gain support, whom to involve and cooperate with at local up to European level based on integrated approaches.

The practice-oriented toolbox will provide practice-oriented advice and recommendations illustrated by best practice examples on how to deal with dissonant heritage sites starting to implement integrated approaches. The intention of the toolbox is to foster a place-based urban and regional development approach, involving local stakeholders and practitioners such as political decision makers, property owners, actors from urban and regional planning as well as initiatives and education as well as arts, culture and tourism.

The toolbox is scheduled to be published in English and German in 2025.

Website www.dissonant-heritage.eu (launched in February 2022): Containing relevant information on the research project and Action Group.

TOPICS ▾ RESEARCH ▾ PUBLICATIONS ABOUT US ▾ SEARCH SERVICE ▾ DE

Objective



Central Animal Laboratories of the Freie Universität Berlin ("Mice bunker"), Germany
Source: Felix Torkar

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5) Observations/Remarks/Recommendations

An essential goal of all Urban Agenda partnerships is to develop policy recommendations for better knowledge exchange, better regulation and better funding in accordance with the Pact of Amsterdam. These recommendations may be directed at the European, national and local levels.

In the Action “Integrated Approaches to Dissonant Heritage”, the following list of recommendations was developed based on surveys, case studies, expert interviews and the discussion at the expert workshop. The catalogue identifies the needs for action at an operational and strategic level in line with the main questions raised in the study:

- What recommendations can be derived with regard to the development potential (functions) and preservation of the dissonant heritage?
- What recommendations are to be formulated for (political) decision-makers at the European and national levels?

Below please find the full list of recommendations. It is planned to merge and condense them in a follow-up step.

a. Better knowledge

Strategic level

Strengthen the knowledge base and support for dissonant heritage sites through networking

1. **Setting up a “network of networks”** for better communication and promotion of dissonant heritage and expansion of the pan-European networks dealing with dissonant heritage issues. Developing and communicating a key message/vision of recognising the value of discussing conflicts and the role of dissonant heritage for democratic culture (rule of law, participation, human rights). Involving multiple stakeholders from different levels and institutions (vertical and horizontal integration). Identifying a champion to support your action in campaigning in the public realm.
2. **Creating and convening a European learning lab on dissonant heritage** for stakeholders at all relevant levels for discussing, sharing and learning about dissonance and dissonant heritage sites (without local/national bias). Involving political leaders in dissemination activities, also to increase the credibility of dissonant heritage sites and to point out their significance, and to help to influence and initiate local discussions. Looking for a search-and-find space for allies and partners and seeking to develop joint projects: systematic knowledge and sharing of practices can strengthen and enlarge groups of common interest.
3. **Preparing good practice examples** of integrated approaches to dissonant heritage along with questions such as: how can integrated approaches be initiated, what kind of activities can integrated approaches include, how do they work, what can be achieved, who are the cooperation partners? Mapping compatible sites, actors and institutions and making them visible in order to create synergies, taking the local/national context into account with regard to integrated approaches.
4. **Creating transnational (exchange) activities within existing formats** to raise awareness about less well-known dissonant heritage sites, to introduce a European perspective to local discussions and to demonstrate the advantages of preserving dissonant heritage sites and using integrated approaches (e.g. during the European Heritage Days and the European Week of Regions and Cities and in the framework of the New European Bauhaus and the European Urban Initiative). Disseminating good

practice experiences such as city partnerships centred on dissonant heritage issues (e.g. Poznan/Strasbourg) or the international student and scholar exchanges based on dissonant heritage issues, such as ATRIUM Forlì and generally the Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe.

5. **Creating (temporary) thematic exchange and learning networks** with a working programme and local action groups (comparable to URBACT networks) for dissonant heritage sites with similar challenges and issues of concern to provide impetus for local actions.
6. **Having a coordinator in charge of a network** who is responsible for organising network exchanges, coordinating partners, supporting administrative work, developing the network, searching for funding, etc. Guaranteeing that this coordinator is paid, for instance by the network members.

Operational level

Strengthen heritage sites dealing with their dissonance both by linking them to other fields/topics and by cooperating with multiple stakeholders.

Fields and topics linked to dissonant heritage sites:

1. **Communicating and promoting topics and issues** that are **well suited for integrated approaches and the opportunities they offer**, both for those responsible for the dissonant heritage and for the field/topic the dissonant heritage site can be linked to (e.g. tourism, education, arts and culture, community development). Linking the topics of concern with each other to achieve a coherent, interdisciplinary approach to deal with dissonant heritage.
2. **Strengthening local dissonant heritage sites by dealing with dissonant heritage in a comparative European perspective.** Promoting exchange and external visibility as an added value to provide structure, raise public awareness and support democracy building in the local context, especially in smaller cities and remote areas.
3. **Conducting applied research** as a basis for integrated approaches and activities; learning research-based facts and identifying different facets and perspectives of the dissonant heritage site to develop new insights and topics.
4. **Establishing permanent and professional structures** (staff, coordinators, etc.) to initiate, develop, implement and coordinate integrated approaches. Implementing a strategic long-term perspective.
5. **Organising strong support and financial resources** for the initiation and implementation of integrated approaches. Identifying “change makers” and well-known local key individuals to support the action.

Stakeholder involvement and cooperation

6. **Having a dedicated budget for participatory and cooperation activities** to support stakeholder involvement and the implementation of related activities and projects that come out of the process. Securing time, staff and financial resources at an early stage.
7. **Having a professional, paid coordinator for stakeholder involvement** and cooperation, in particular when working with volunteers. **Engaging volunteers** is crucial and generates enthusiasm, energy and inspiration, even if it requires additional coordination efforts.
8. **Using digital media to gain visibility, support and volunteers**, in particular for remote sites where potential local partners are scarce.
9. **Developing a clear idea of the nature of the dissonant heritage site and its focus**, both to raise public awareness and to attract suitable partners. Using and elaborating the idea as a strong point of reference to convince potential partners and supporters of the importance of cooperation as an added value of the dissonant heritage site.

10. **Scaling up and ensuring continuous cooperation – building up trust** starting with smaller or less contested topics and projects. Based on successful participatory processes and cooperation, building up further involvement and cooperation activities or permanent structures (e.g. committee, steering group) for continuous cooperation. This will strengthen the level of trust between stakeholders and the base of supporters.
11. **Getting in touch with key partners:** getting to know and understand their motivation for dealing with the dissonant heritage site, seeking out common interests and goals.
12. **Engaging national and international experts** to bring in their specific perspectives and help to diversify and broaden local perspectives on the significance of the site.
13. **Basing transparent participatory approaches and cooperation on clear roles and rules and a clear trajectory:** explaining from the start the roles of each involved stakeholder and the rules of involvement, and only allowing those who agree to these rules to participate. Explaining clearly the purpose of the involvement and cooperation and what can and cannot be achieved in order to avoid misunderstandings and false expectations.
14. **Ensuring ownership and support of ideas and results that come out of stakeholder involvement and cooperation** by developing shared ideas and projects dealing with the dissonance and jointly executing them. Ensuring financial resources for the implementation of project ideas and activities.
15. **Motivating stakeholders and communities, involving them in the interpretation of the site and reaching out to groups with different perspectives** to ensure an open, public dialogue about different perspectives and narratives and to integrate them into the interpretation of the dissonant heritage site. Finding ways to motivate local communities and actively reach out to groups with different perspectives so that these communities and groups can reflect on the various perspectives – based on a strong foundation of scholarly knowledge, as well as a strong understanding of the context in order to rule out perspectives that are not fact-based. Making use of oral history, arts projects and participatory approaches to include many groups. Identifying and addressing potential barriers to participation for stakeholders. Extending the debate to the national/European level if necessary to broaden the range of perspectives and make dissonance an opportunity rather than a challenge for public awareness.
16. **Allowing emotions, different perspectives and narratives to be expressed** as a part of dissonant heritage sites. Facilitating such expression, but not seeking to reconcile different perspectives. Often, emotions are attached to the different perspectives. They cannot and should not be “erased”, but if necessary should be “calmed down” to a level that enables a discourse about the different perspectives. Alternatively, developing a new approach to the different perspectives that allows a different type of discourse/focus.

b. Better regulation

Strategic level

1. **Developing a regulatory framework for a European learning lab on dissonant heritage** as a cross-cutting topic of European concern which requires multi-level and multi-sectoral networking. Using joint work on integrated approaches as an opportunity to raise awareness and offer support from many disciplines; embedding this work in a trust-based long-term process for political recognition in terms of structural funding. Making this learning lab the place for debating and identifying multi-criteria matrixes (beyond dissonance) in order to prioritise actions and implement tailor-made funding programmes.
2. **Developing and adopting a dissonant heritage protection “regulation”** comparable to the UNESCO Convention on the Protection of Underwater Cultural Heritage.

3. **Developing an ethical charter/guidelines on what to consider when linking dissonant heritage to other topics and sectors**, for example what kinds of tourism, cultural, artistic and commercial (revenue-generating) activities and uses are appropriate for which type of dissonant heritage sites.
4. **Implementing a long-term programme for transnational exchange and support** for organisations and initiatives dealing with dissonant heritage and for students, pupils, teachers and educational institutions for joint (learning) activities related to dissonant heritage and history – this programme should be based on the experience of ‘Erasmus+’ and ‘Europe for Citizens’ and should be developed jointly with DG Education & Culture.
5. **Putting in place regulations that allow regional/national governments to financially support privately owned or privately managed dissonant heritage sites** when the sites are listed or have a letter of intent from a relevant public institution.
6. **Including “dissonant topics”** related to dissonant heritage sites **in school curricula**.

Operational level

1. **Ensuring that politically independent institutions (with basic funding) are in charge of maintenance and management of dissonant heritage sites and installing decentralised decision-making structures** to decide what is allowed in listed dissonant heritage sites (especially with regard to construction and restoration measures) in order to simplify and speed up decision-making and approval processes.
2. **Including “dissonant heritage” as a category for monument protection** to enable the listing of dissonant heritage sites, even when all physical traces have disappeared.
3. **Adapting monument protection regulations to allow not only the restoration of the original state, but also the preservation of the different time layers** of a building/monument/site to better demonstrate the manifold histories of the site.
4. **Adapting land-use and zoning regulations** to make it possible to define uses that are not allowed at or around a dissonant heritage site because of ethical concerns (e.g. an amusement park next to a concentration camp).
5. Regulating the reinvestment of **revenues from activities at (dissonant) heritage sites at the heritage site**.

c. Better funding

Strategic level

1. **Providing permanent institutional funding for organisations in charge of dissonant heritage sites**. Enabling sites to hire staff, to implement permanent and integrated actions and to contract consultancies (professionalisation and institutionalisation) as a key for successful work. Creating the prerequisites for permanent budgets with broad support at the decision-making level, particularly at the regional level, as well as a good and clearly communicable content-related concept and a business plan. Currently, institutional support for dissonant heritage sites is considered to be established if a permanent budget is provided by regional and/or national institutions. Sometimes it is also secured by the local authority if the institution in charge of the dissonant heritage site is part of the local public administration.
2. **Providing funding for additional project activities** dealing with the site and its dissonance. Hiring additional professional staff to improve the conditions for applying for and managing projects (accounting, documentation), in particular those of European programmes. In the long run, overcoming “patchwork” project funding, in particular if integrated approaches are to be applied, as it does not allow for continuous work on the dissonant heritage sites.

3. **Providing funding for research programmes that foster “dissonant heritage” issues in order** to collect facts on dissonant heritage sites, support local and integrated activities, and allow for research on wider narratives and perspectives, as well as on the dissonant heritage of the future (e.g. current oil shipping ports).
4. **Requiring EU incentives to integrate dissonant heritage into national and regional policies and funding programmes** and to earmark budgets for projects related to dissonant heritage sites. Supplementing funding programmes to enable the topic of dissonant heritage to more easily fit with funding programmes. Integrated approaches are key here.
5. **Encouraging integrated approaches to dissonant heritage sites and their adaptive reuse within funding programmes**, for example (innovative) cultural, tourist, educational and outreach activities as well as community development projects about and with dissonant heritage sites. Providing funding programmes which allow for a variety of approaches to inspire creativity and innovation for integrated approaches. In this spirit, connecting funding provided for the adaptive reuse of certain types of dissonant heritage sites to social and public uses at the site.
6. **Providing funding for (local) networks and communication to integrate different local stakeholders** and to ensure integrated approaches and enlarged perspectives and knowledge.
7. Connecting dissonant heritage issues to the **transnational dimension of cohesion policy and funding** within the European Urban Initiative 2021-2027, which aims to **support cities through innovative actions, capacity and knowledge building, policy development and communication about sustainable urban development**.

Operational level

1. **Understanding the nature of the dissonant heritage site**, especially the specific kind of dissonance, as a precondition for seeking financial support. Providing support for funding recipients for their operational work and for the maintenance of the site. Preparing sound business cases on the sites’ opportunities and potential, for example in terms of adapted reuse and cultural tourism. Such cases should highlight strong/professional management, sound estimation of investment needs and revenue generation and identification of the available financial resources and financial structure mechanism (public, private or mixed).
2. **Generating site-specific revenues** (for which staff is needed, too): Encouraging the development of independent sources of income, for example from membership and entrance fees; commercial activities such as bookshops, events, festivals (which are possible at certain types of dissonant heritage sites) and renting out space; as well as donations/fundraising and prize money from competitions (even fines from court cases can be mentioned here); volunteer support can also be an important in-kind contribution. Keeping in mind that the site’s dissonance places limits on the generation of site-specific revenues, especially when it comes to places where atrocities have happened (e.g. merchandising products cannot be sold or festivals organised).
3. **Providing funding for structural preservation and safeguarding** of the dissonant heritage as a key to authentically conveying the history/histories and circumstances that a site represents. Setting up such funding as an urgent priority. In terms of protection, acting to prevent further damage to the site: the physical preservation of the heritage site is the condition for the implementation of integrated approaches.
4. **Adapting funding programmes to target smaller organisations that manage dissonant heritage sites**. In many cases, smaller organisations cannot manage major funding programmes, as they have a smaller and less professional staff. Establishing simplified procedures and more flexibility during implementation. Supporting the administration of funds through co-funding rates with less demanding requirements. In

addition, granting financial support to smaller projects that can be used in a flexible way.

5. **Improving regional or national offices to support the acquisition and administration of funding** by providing information on suitable funding programmes and institutions; offering training courses on acquiring and applying for funding and generating revenues; and offering support in the administration of (EU) funding.
6. **Offering capacity building to boost professional skills** with respect to volunteer work and to management structures capable of handling the site and obtaining the necessary funding.

Outlook

Participation in the UAEU has attracted significant attention to dissonant cultural heritage. It stimulates new discussions, cooperation and funding approaches. A broad circle of actors and decision-makers can be reached and mobilized for the integrated development of the dissonant heritage sites.

The Action Group has become a growing network of European experts who regularly meet to have an exchange on the topic of dissonant heritage sites and who have started their own cooperations. In fact, the Action Group has functioned as a “network of networks”. The group has expressed an interest to continue its dialogue and work. Among the ideas for continued engagement are:

- Increasing awareness, e.g. via a flyer, short explanatory videos, podcasts, a wiki
- Dissemination of knowledge through the participation in events such as the World Urban Forum, Katowice (June 2022) and the European Week of Regions and Cities (October 2022).
- Possible workshop in the framework of the New European Bauhaus (e.g. on reuse)
- Integrated academic seminar „Dissonant heritage and European citizenship” and a “Dissonant Heritage reader”

Relevant information:

- **Expert paper** “Approaches to memory in dealing with difficult/dissonant heritage” by Prof. Em. Dr. Anna Bull, University of Bath (2021)
- **Orientation Paper** (2022)
https://www.bbsr.bund.de/BBSR/EN/research/programs/ExWoSt/FieldsOfResearch/dissonant-heritage/orientation-paper.pdf?__blob=publicationFile&v=3

which includes:

- Action Group’s criteria matrix for selecting dissonant heritage sites
- Selected case studies

Acknowledgements

We would like to thank all supporters of this Action and to invite interested stakeholders to join the Action – we plan to continue the Action beyond the official timeframe of the Urban Agenda Partnership on Culture and Cultural Heritage. If you would like to learn more, or if you would like to contribute, please get in touch with Birgit Kann (Birgit.Kann@BBR.Bund.de) or Jan Schultheiß (jan.schultheiss@bmwsb.bund.de).