

International Research Staff Exchange Scheme: FP7-PEOPLE-2011-IRSES

Grant 295045: PUMAH

Planning, Urban Management and Heritage: Publishable summary

Project objectives

The overall aim of this project was to develop a joint networking and advanced research programme on critical issues of planning, management and urban heritage to strengthen the research partnership between Newcastle University (UNEW), Groningen University (RUG), the Italian National Research Council (CNR), Middle East Technical University (METU), Politecnico di Milano (MIL), Wuhan University (WHU), Peking University (PKU) and Xi'an University of Architecture and Technology (XAUAT). This aim was achieved by short and longer-term periods of staff exchanges between the European and the Chinese partners and networking activities between the participating institutions. The ultimate goal of this project was to achieve more rapid progress in advancing current knowledge, both conceptually and in terms of practical strategies of management, of the challenges of managing heritage as part of a wider process of spatial planning in the very different contexts provided by Europe and China. Its focus was the role of heritage in continuity and change in the city, although a significant sub-strand of work developed on villages. The project supported internationally recognised research, international networking, high quality academic publications, knowledge transfer and has led to proposals for further funded projects. In this way we are planning to establish a long-term research cooperation between the participating institutions.

Europe and China are, broadly speaking, polar examples of the rate of urban change. In Europe the pace of urban change, in part due to heritage designation, is often very slow and we maybe building up a situation where some cities fall into an unhealthy stasis. In China, by contrast, rapid economic and demographic growth has made urban change an astonishingly rapid process. This threatens to overwhelm and in some cases has already overwhelmed the buildings, morphological ensembles and historic patterns that are major resources and vehicles in the transmission of heritage experiences. The contrast between a Europe which, as a broad generalisation, can be viewed as tackling the problems of success in heritage protection and a China facing the quite different challenges described above promises was one of the most fruitful aspects of this academic interaction as we engaged with critical questions about the study of time, speed and urban development and the institutional responses to these.

The project was based around five substantive work packages

1. Heritage in urban regeneration: considering the variety of roles that heritage has been called upon to play in the physical regeneration of neighbourhoods, their economic revitalisation and consequent demographic and social change.
2. Spatial planning, urban design and heritage: considering the role of the conservation and management of heritage as part of wider processes of spatial planning, including design-led approaches.
3. Heritage, Activity, Place: considering on the one hand the role heritage performs for different urban activities and on the other how the spatiality of the city, and its different urban spaces, may utilise heritage in different ways.
4. Management of urban heritage tourism: considering both conceptual ideas and management tools for urban heritage tourism. This included the role of monitoring urban heritage tourism for the better management of historic centres and will promote urban enhancement policies through documentation and digital classification

5. Methodologies of investigation and decision-making: This cross-cutting work package critically examined both methodologies of research investigation pertinent to the other work packages and the linked but distinct subject of methodologies that support decision-making in the planning and management of heritage.

Project activities

This project developed joint research programmes between European and Chinese universities on planning, urban management and heritage. It was based upon short and longer-term periods of staff exchanges of both experienced and early-stage researchers between the European and the Chinese partners. This primary mode of knowledge exchange and development was supplemented and deepened by specific project workshops, project staff gatherings at international conferences and other non-project funded networking activities. A principal project workshop was held during the course of each year of the project. In each case this was organised in conjunction with an international conference. At two of these special PUMAH sessions were organised and at the other two a number of PUMAH papers presented:

1. The first meeting of the partnership was carried out at the AESOP Congress, hosted by METU July 2012. Two special sessions of the project were held at the congress.
2. The second meeting of the partnership was carried out in Xi'an in conjunction with a PUMAH workshop and with the Xi'an October 2013 conference on International Conference of Modern Architecture Heritage Conservation
3. The third meeting of the partnership was carried out in Rome, hosted by CNR, in conjunction with a PUMAH workshop November 15-16, 2014 and organised in conjunction with the ICOMOS international Assembly Florence 9-14 November 2014.
4. The fourth meeting of the partnership was carried out in Newcastle in conjunction with a PUMAH workshop 30 June-3 July 2015. The Newcastle workshop was preceded by the Changing Cities Conference, Porto Heli, Greece, 2015. Two special PUMAH sessions were organised at this conference.

Project outputs

Whilst the main purpose of the PUMAH project was the networking and training researchers, the project has already led to substantial numbers of scientific publications in the public domain, others forthcoming and others under development. Highlights include:

- A special issue of the international refereed European-language journal *DiSP*, March 2014.
- A special issue of the Chinese language *Urban Planning International*, April 2014.
- A special issue of the Italian language journal *Urbanistica* is forthcoming (June 2016)
- A special issue of the international refereed English-language journal *Journal of Urban Design*, is agreed with papers in review.
- A special issue of the international refereed English-language journal *METU Journal of the Faculty of Architecture*, is agreed with papers in review.
- A substantial number of book chapters and additional papers have been published in international peer-reviewed journals or are forthcoming
- A book from the project, involving all partners and including a rich variety of Chinese and European case studies is under development.
- The project has already led to co-operations on further successful funded projects alongside a number of unsuccessful proposals.

Project web-site

<http://www.pumah.org/>