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ABSTRACTS BOOK

HERITAGE FOR PLANET EARTH 2018 INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM

SESSION 1

Tourism market trends: to manage or to be managed?

SESSION 2

Digital technologies: saving identity or feeding globalization?

SESSION 3

Smart city and heritage conservation by means of modern building technologies



20TH 1998 | 2018

GENERAL ASSEMBLY
OF INTERNATIONAL EXPERTS
& SYMPOSIUM
HERITAGE FOR PLANET EARTH® 2018



Auditorium al Duomo
FLORENCE, MARCH 3RD - 4TH, 2018

UP-TO-DATE PUBLIC OPEN SPACE IN INTERACTIVE HISTORICAL ENVIRONMENT: RIGA CITY CENTRE

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Nevertheless of the processes having caused significant changes in the planning structure or use of the public space of the historical parts of many European cities during the 20th century, the scale of the medieval space and the nature of the built-up environment mostly has remained. Expansion of cities and their impact areas have extended the semantic boundaries of urban centers, while public open space in the city centres still maintain attractiveness, especially within the medieval cores. Increasing global interest to cultural history and increasingly easy travel conditions and opportunities result in growing number of visitors of historical sites, thus directly affecting medieval city centres. Consequently, both national and local public activities take place mostly there. The level of functionality of the public open space depends on the differentiation of its separate structural units.

In order to increase knowledge and awareness in all the groups of users of the public open space of urban environment and consequences of its development as well as highlights up-to-date digital online technologies take more and more significant place substituting the former paper sources of information. Riga, the capital city of Latvia and UNESCO World Heritage Site, is not an exception. Recently several online digital tools have been developed to help various groups of users of the urban environment to be informed of the city as well as to promote active exchange of information among them.

The present study focuses on the summary of interests and needs of the main groups of users of the historical city center – Riga Old Town, analysing correspondance of the historical spatial system to up-to-date needs and availability of adequate spaces, defines the priorities of high-quality public open space and analyses discourses of digital information in up-to-date urban environment.