

# RESTITUTIONS AND PRIVATIZATION

The political development after 1989 reinstated the private property rights, which affected numerous buildings and immobile assets. The individual responsibility of owners slowed down the deterioration of many facilities.

The initial generous support for ever-neglected cultural legacy was followed up by successful establishment of grant systems. That's why the maintenance and reconstructions could start again, and many heritage sites, including whole centers of historic towns, were revamped.

Towns and villages have gone through essential and positive changes since the 1990s; their regeneration belongs to the best results of the development in the last decades.

Despite original pessimistic assumptions, very good care is also provided to about 50 castles and chateaus that were returned, after decades of governmental ownership, to original owners or their descendants during restitutions. Most of them are now publicly accessible.

Even in the new regime, heritage assets are sometimes treated badly. The reinstating of private businesses brought about too liberal views regarding private ownership, which sometimes resulted in damages of public space and worthy buildings. Especially in large cities, the adaptation of heritage sites was sometimes inadequate, and some of new buildings were way too big. There's not much of modern state-of-the-art architecture, and the current development only too often favors the

commercial aspects, while the aesthetic functions for the surroundings take a backseat. The general increase of life standards, together with the lack of effective regulation, results in vast expansion of ugly satellite neighborhoods, or standardized industrial and storage halls on the edge of almost every town.

