

# EVENTS

seminars  
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exhibitions

## for the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of METU Graduate Program in Restoration



### Cultural Heritage, Landscape and Rural Development How 11 rural regions in Europe are using their cultural heritage and landscape resources to improve development

20. 02. 2015 | 12:00  
@ Faculty of Architecture  
Kubbealtı

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Improving the quality of life in remote communities is directly related to the survival and enhancement of their culture, built heritage and landscapes. Conservation of these places creates a spirit of home while interlinking generations including diaspora to connect them to their past and reinforce a sense of belonging. But these unique places and their values are extremely fragile thus must be vigorously protected.

Successful rural development aids in this protection and is a process that aims to improve the quality of life by helping people set their own priorities through effective and inclusive involvement, improving local capacity, social services as well as safeguarding culture. However, rural development that does not address culture, the built environment or landscape risks endangering the community, its values and sustainability. This presentation describes the experiences of the HISTCAPE project partners and our attempt to assist rural communities in safeguarding their cultural heritage and landscapes.

Small rural communities have come under serious threat over recent decades, facing depopulation, lower income levels and high unemployment – developments that are adversely affecting the demographic balance and sustainability in rural areas. Small towns in European regions are threatened by a loss of facilities and services combined with a loss of economic activity, resulting in a lack of investment in rural areas. The acceleration of this trend directly threatens the existence of a substantial portion of Europe's historic assets.

Good Practice Examples – What are possible approaches of rural development that incorporate the protection of culture, historic places and landscapes? How are we to improve the quality of life while simultaneously protecting cultural heritage and landscape? Through the HISTCAPE project the partners worked with communities and their representatives to identify good practice examples that address problems faced by rural regions. Many of these good practice examples target common rural issues including improving governance, adding value to agriculture, promoting responsible tourism, increasing access to education, diversifying income, including the services sector and information and communication technologies.

Examples from Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, Greece, Italy, Spain, Portugal, Germany, Austria and Slovenia will be presented.

# 50/19 seminar