



OVPM . OWHC . OCPM



2023 ANNUAL ACTIVITY REPORT

of the Organization of World Heritage Cities

Table of content



01

Message of the President

02

Message of the Secretary General

03

The year in review

08

OWHC members and statistics

09

Board of Directors

10

Finance

11

Partners and collaborators

12

OWHC online presence

13

Cordoba World Congress

MESSAGE OF THE PRESIDENT

BRUNO MARCHAND
PRESIDENT OF THE OWHC
MAYOR OF QUEBEC

Dear members,

The General Assembly of the Organization of World Heritage Cities (OWHC) has approved its 2021-2025 Strategy, with the aim of strengthening the organization politically and developing its operational capabilities. In 2023, this evolution continued in concrete terms, based primarily on the Québec Roadmap.

The 116 World Heritage Cities members in good standing in 2023 represent an important political force. Their international recognition gives them a symbolic dimension, and their struggles and actions serve as benchmarks for all historic cities. By identifying four major "Issues at stake" and mobilizing around the vision expressed in the "Manifesto," the OWHC is setting its sights very high, in line with a global trend. In this way, we are asserting that we want to learn from each other and work together to find effective responses to adapt to climate change and meet our fellow citizens' aspirations for a better quality of life. By rallying around these ideas, we can do better, faster.

In addition, the creation and implementation of "Collaborative Networks" within the Organization is laying the foundations for a new approach to the way the OWHC operates. Together with the pilot "Thematic" cities, some forty cities are involved in the Roadmap at various levels.

The method is gradually being put in place and is constantly being adjusted thanks to feedback from municipal experts, who are involved in a process of reflection that runs parallel to the usual projects and procedures. My hope is that the OWHC will become a lever for breaking deadlocks and facilitating other forms of cooperation, to ensure that the collective work undertaken by our cities has a lasting positive impact.

The interest aroused by this approach means we can look forward with enthusiasm to the 17th World Congress, to be held in Cordoba (Spain) from September 24 to 27, 2024. On this occasion, we will have the opportunity to take note of our initial results and consolidate the momentum that the "Manifesto" and the Roadmap provide for the OWHC.

In closing, I would like to thank the members of the Board of Directors for their commitment, as well as my fellow mayors on the Panel, the elected representatives and the coordinators of the Collaborative Networks who, together with the Advisory Body appointed by the General Secretariat, are designing the next symposium. I would also like to thank the Gouvernement du Québec for supporting the implementation of the Québec Roadmap and, of course, all the member cities who are increasingly mobilizing, curious about or already won over by the promises of the work in progress.



MESSAGE OF THE SECRETARY GENERAL

Numerous activities were carried out in 2023. They have not only placed great demands on member cities, but have also consolidated the OWHC's operational capacities and enabled us to pursue the changes initiated under Strategy 2021-2025. The Organization is gradually strengthening its effectiveness to better serve the political ambitions and technical and scientific needs of cities. This evolution is necessary to better engage and support its members, and thus, little by little, convince other World Heritage cities to join the Organization.

With this in mind, we can count on solid finances, thanks mainly to the 116 member cities in good standing in 2023. Despite the freezing of membership fees since 2010 and the effects of soaring inflation in recent years, expenditure in 2023 has been partly offset by a reduction in administrative expenses. The rigorous implementation of the 2023 budget has made it possible to avoid the anticipated deficit and achieve a balanced budget. In addition, the Gouvernement du Québec has made a financial contribution to the Québec Roadmap, providing a grant of \$160,000 CAD until 2026 to support this activity, including the hiring of a new Urban Heritage Projects Officer. Finally, the Ville de Québec (Quebec City municipal government) continues to provide material support to the organization.

The administrative modernization currently underway has also led to the adoption of a new protocol that provides the Regional Secretariats with clearer, more rigorous procedures, and strengthens the complementarity of regional activities with the Action Plan.

The General Assembly, which is the heart and driving force of the Organization, adopted an ambitious 2024 budget that will support the Québec Roadmap as far as necessary. The 17th World Congress in Cordoba (September 24-27, 2024) will be an opportunity to assess this unprecedented effort and launch a new phase that will take us a step further towards defining and adopting a "New Urban Project" for the OWHC. This objective inspires and impels the transformation of our programs, providing members with better tools for cooperation and fostering renewed partnerships with international players.

MIKHAËL DE THYSE
SECRETARY GENERAL





THE YEAR 2023 IN REVIEW

The actions and activities carried out by the OWHC during 2023 were aimed at strengthening the political and operational dimension of the Organization within the framework of the OWHC's Strategy 2021-2025, through the implementation of the Action Plan 2022-2024.

The significant involvement of member cities in the Québec Roadmap and the Collaborative Networks has laid the foundations for a participative engineering process unprecedented for the Organization. The completion of various other programs and projects in 2023 marks a significant step forward in strengthening the political dimension of the Organization and consolidates the resources that will enable the OWHC to develop its New Urban Project. This objective was defined at the 16th World Congress. Its ultimate aim is the emergence of a new generation of urban development strategies and projects, nurtured by a heritage-based approach to sustainable development that reconciles urban, human, and environmental dimensions.

TOWARDS GREATER EFFICIENCY FOR THE GENERAL SECRETARIAT

Based on the decisions and impetus provided by the Board of Directors, in 2023 the OWHC continued to modernize the operations and tools of the General Secretariat. Among the many actions implemented, the organizational chart was reviewed to maximize employee duties and responsibilities. Following on from this, a complete reorganization of accounting and financial management not only improved efficiency, but also generated considerable savings. The OWHC was thus able to strengthen its team of project managers to support the pursuit of the Action Plan's objectives.

In addition to these major improvements, the rights and privileges of members, the website, and the Organization's communications strategy have been updated, and the General Secretariat has worked jointly with the Regional Secretariats to revise the operating protocol that governs them.

Finally, the OWHC's database software (formerly ACCESS) has been replaced by DIRECTUS, which is more modern and better adapted to the Organization's specific needs, notably enabling more effective contact management.

STRONG GOVERNANCE TO DRIVE THE OWHC FORWARD

During 2023, the Board of Directors met twice: in Luxembourg City (Luxembourg) in March, then in Bruges (Belgium) in October. The main resolutions adopted included the following:

- Support for the development of the OWHC's Assistance Program in case of Emergencies.
- The mandate given to the General Secretariat to reorganize youth programs in line with the OWHC's new objectives.
- Validation of the Cordoba Symposium Concept and the principles of the Loyalty Reward Program for the Cordoba Congress in 2024.
- The mandate given to the General Secretariat to implement actions aimed at retaining current members and seeking additional budgetary sources.
- A review of Board operating procedures.
- Dissolution of the Euro-Asia Regional Secretariat based in Kazan (Russian Federation).

The 26th General Assembly of the OWHC also met virtually on December 12, 2023, bringing together 35 member cities in good standing. They unanimously adopted the 2024 budget presented, which is in line with previous budgets and supports the 2022-2024 Action Plan, bolsters the objectives pursued in the 2021-2025 Strategy, and formalizes the financial effort required in 2024 in the run-up to the 17th World Congress.

MAIN ACTIVITIES IN 2023

Québec Roadmap

Adopted at the 16th World Congress in Québec City (2022), the Roadmap provides OWHC member cities with collaborative tools inspired by "communities of practice", enabling them to seek solutions to the environmental, social, and economic crises that are having a major impact on urban development and jeopardizing heritage preservation.

A total of 21 cities and one Regional Secretariat have formally committed to the Roadmap in 2023, and nine of them presented their Priority Thematic Topics at virtual Round Tables organized in June and July 2023. Four Pilot Cities formed Collaborative Networks which adopted and initiated a series of workshops involving 26 cities. The workshops enabled the cities to exchange their experiences in relation to the Thematic and, progressively, to discuss more specifically the Issues at stake raised.



The Roadmap in events:

5

Thematic round tables

6

Preparatory meetings between the Advisory Group and the Pilot Cities

2

Meetings between the Scientific Committee, tasked with drafting working documents, and the General Secretariat

6

Statutory Roadmap follow-up meetings between the Advisory Group and the General Secretariat

2

Consultancy missions with the General Secretariat, to Dubrovnik and Puebla

5

Collaborative networking webinars

1

Panel of Roadmap mayors

1

Meeting of the Roadmap coordinators' network

The General Secretariat has developed and launched a number of bodies to support the process as it unfolds, particularly in the run-up to the Cordoba Symposium:

- a. The Mayors' Panel, which ensures political oversight of the entire process.
- b. The elected officials' network, which oversees strategic thinking.
- c. The network of coordinators responsible for Collaborative Networks.
- d. The Advisory Group, made up of international experts, which assists the General Secretariat throughout the process.

In October, the Mayors' Panel met for the second time since the inception of the Roadmap, in Brussels (Belgium). Their "Manifesto" was adopted, underlining the original contribution of World Heritage cities to the Roadmap, and specifying their political ambitions and the main challenges facing member cities.

To find out more about the Roadmap, visit the microsite dedicated to this program, which was created in 2023: <https://www.feuillederouteovpm.com/en>

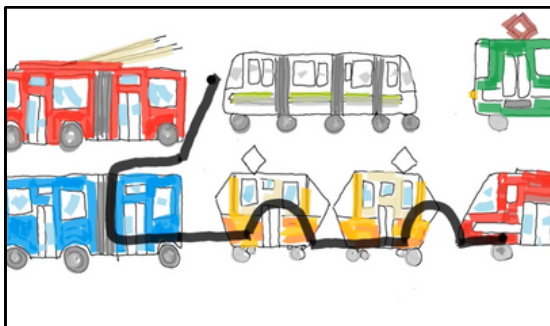
30th OWHC Anniversary and Solidarity Day 2023

The year 2023 commemorated a particularly important date for the OWHC: the creation of the Organization on September 8, 1993 in Fez (Morocco), by the representatives of the 56 cities present at this first General Assembly of the OWHC. The 2023 Solidarity Day of World Heritage Cities therefore celebrated the 30th anniversary of the OWHC, during which various activities highlighting the importance of the urban heritage of member cities were organized. At the 26th General Assembly, a commemorative video was unveiled, which has since been broadcast across the OWHC's communication platforms.



2023 International Video Production Competition

Young people aged 14 to 21 from OWHC cities were invited to take part in the International Video Production Competition on the topic of Heritage and Quality of Life. Among the 12 finalist videos, Team Crystal from Jongno-Gu (Republic of Korea), won the 14-17 category with "Blowin' in the wind: My city, Jongno," while Hanna Peresztegi from Budapest (Hungary) was the winner in the 18-21 category for "Budapest Without." Jury members involved in selecting the winning videos were Rafael Perez de la Concha Camacho, Head of the Tourism and World Heritage Unit of the City of Cordoba (Spain), in his capacity as representative for one of the winning cities in 2021; Prof. Laurier Turgeon, Director of the Institut du patrimoine culturel (cultural heritage institute) at Université Laval in Quebec City, also Director of the Laboratoire d'enquête ethnologique et multimédia (ethnological and multimedia research laboratory); and Mikhaël De Thyse, Secretary General of the OWHC.



"Budapest Without"



"Blowin' in the wind: My city, Jongno"

Regional activities

The Regional Secretariats organized several regional meetings in the following cities: Xochimilco, Gyeongju, Elvas, Vilnius, and Bruges. These meetings enabled the participating cities to hold workshops on a range of urban heritage management topics and to decide together on their Secretariat's ambitions for the year ahead. Over the course of 2023, the Secretariats also organized several working meetings (virtual or in person) and implemented a number of programs: discussion tables, school exchange projects, project meetings, youth workshops, expert workshops, magazine publications, and the like. The Regional Secretariats have also carried out a number of actions in support of the 2023 flagship program, the Québec Roadmap, contributing to the dissemination of the program, city buy-in, and the work of the Collaborative Networks.



Regional Meeting - Xochimilco - November 2023

A program under construction

The design of a proposal for the Assistance Program in case of Emergencies was initiated in 2023. A first working meeting was organized in Vilnius (Lithuania) on March 20 and 21, 2023, to initiate discussions on the program. Information was gathered from nine member cities who volunteered to take part in a survey, providing a description of their experiences in dealing with various types of disasters. Thanks to these numerous contributions and a working meeting organized in Marrakech (Morocco) on November 28 and 29 between five external collaborating experts and members of the OWHC, an action plan for a pilot phase has been drawn up. The aim is to finalize a "checklist" of preventive actions to be implemented in member cities and to identify the form and nature of the assistance that should be offered by the OWHC under the future program. Work continues into 2024, with the aim of presenting a program proposal to the General Assembly in Cordoba (September 2024).



Workshop on the Development of the Assistance Program - Marrakech - November 28-29, 2023

OWHC MEMBERS AND STATISTICS



OVPM . OWHC . OCPM

116

Cities in good standing within
the network

2

New member cities in 2023:
Harar Jugol
Scottsdale

21

New cities that have formally joined the Roadmap

BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Mr. Bruno Marchand

Mayor of Québec City
(Canada)

President of the OWHC



Mr. Carlos Pinto de Sá

Mayor - Évora (Portugal)

Vice-President of the OWHC



Mr. Dirk De fauw

Mayor - Brugge (Belgium)

Treasurer of the OWHC



Mr. Michael Ludwig

Mayor - Vienna (Austria)

Director of the OWHC



Dr. Carlos Moreira Reisch

Intendant - Colonia del Sacramento (Uruguay)

Director of the OWHC



Ms. Lydie Polfer

Mayor - Luxembourg
(Luxembourg)

Director of the OWHC



Mr. Jacek Majchrowski

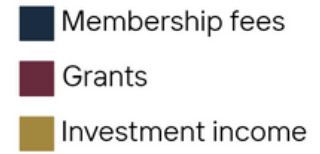
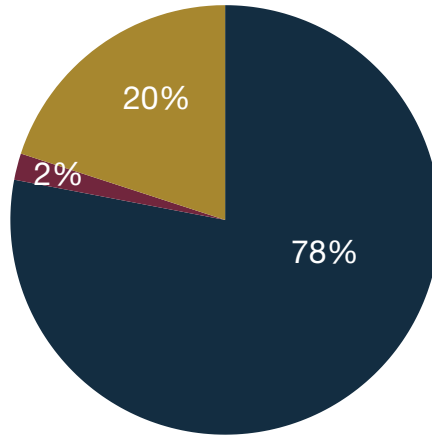
Mayor - Kraków (Poland)

Director of the OWHC

FINANCE

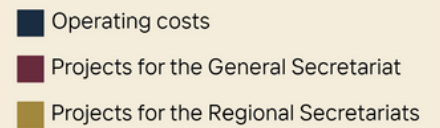
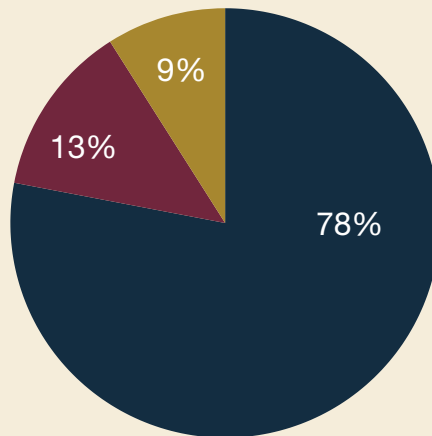
Financial report 2023*

Income 2023
830 487 \$



The grant comes from the OWHC rent provided by the City of Quebec.

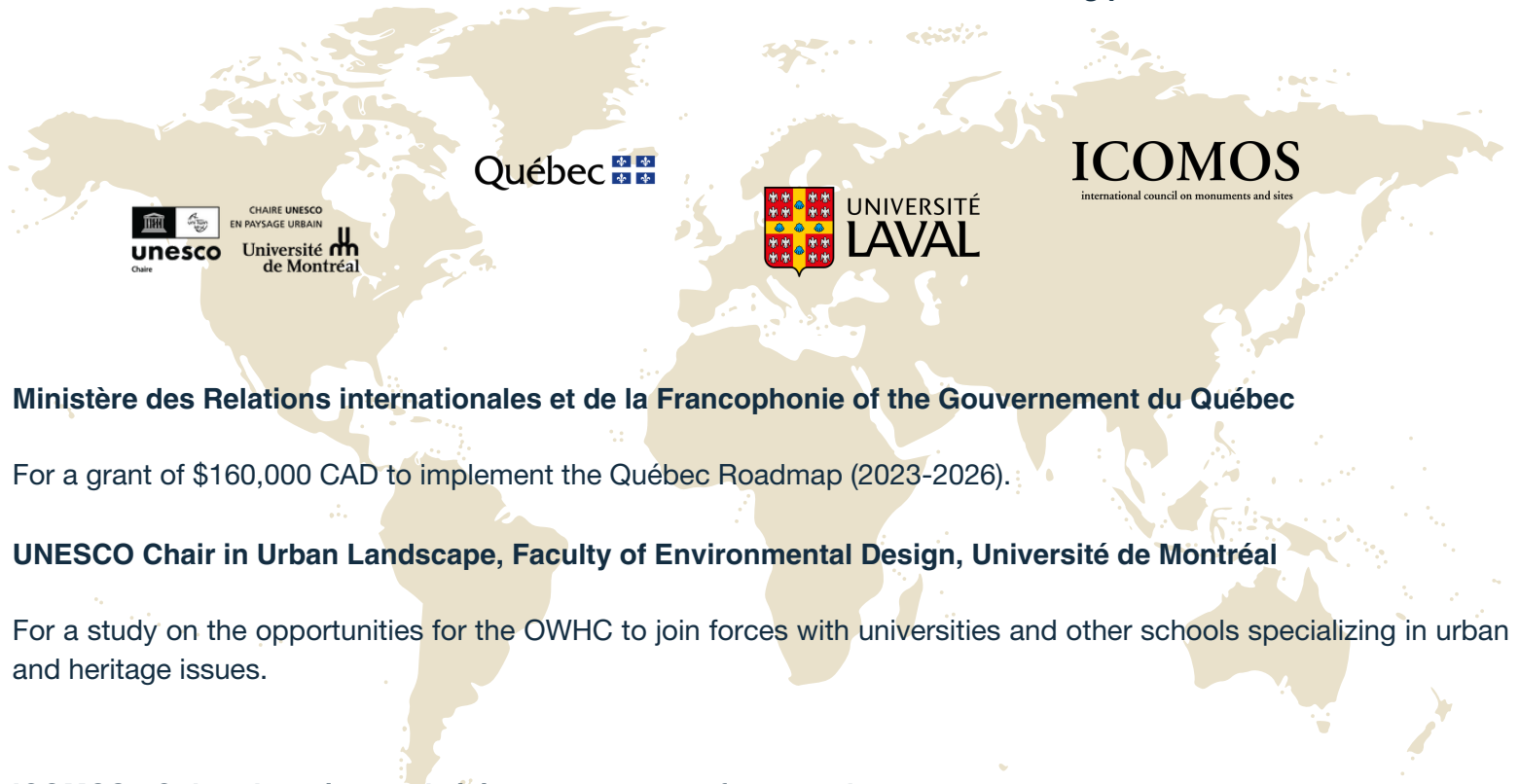
Expenditure 2023
813 051 \$



*Data extracted from 2023 financial statements

PARTNERS AND ASSOCIATES

On behalf of the OWHC, the General Secretariat would like to thank the following partners:



Ministère des Relations internationales et de la Francophonie of the Gouvernement du Québec

For a grant of \$160,000 CAD to implement the Québec Roadmap (2023-2026).

UNESCO Chair in Urban Landscape, Faculty of Environmental Design, Université de Montréal

For a study on the opportunities for the OWHC to join forces with universities and other schools specializing in urban and heritage issues.

ICOMOS - Cultural tourism and visitor management framework

For the presentation in 2023 of the Operational Framework on Cultural Tourism and Visitor Management, developed between 2021 and 2023, and now available on the OWHC website for members.

Roadmap contacts

For their participation in the 2nd Mayors' Panel meeting on October 13, 2023 in Brussels (Belgium) and their support for the Roadmap, the representatives of the following organizations and institutions:

ICOMOS-CIVVIH, Climate Heritage Network, Europa Nostra, European Heritage Hub, URBACT, Eurocité, UNESCO, OECD, and Council of Europe (Apologies for absence: Cultural Heritage Finance Alliance, Cities Alliance, UNOPS, European Union).

Université Laval

For the opportunity offered to the OWHC to sit on the examination board for the winter 2023 session of Université Laval's School of Architecture and on the steering committee of Université Laval's Institut du patrimoine culturel (institute of cultural heritage, or IPAC).

OWHC ONLINE PRESENCE

The OWHC uses several platforms to communicate with its members:

- The website, which presents all the news, events, programs, and essential information related to the Organization.
- The Roadmap microsite, a working tool for the cities participating in this project.
- Social medias, which plays a role in sharing the organization's important news with our collaborators and the general public.
- The newsletter is also a tool for sharing important OWHC announcements with its members, directly via email. Make sure to subscribe by sending a request to secretariat@ovpm.org

Websites :



www.ovpm.org



www.feuillederouteovpm.com

Social medias:



OVPM OWHC OCPM



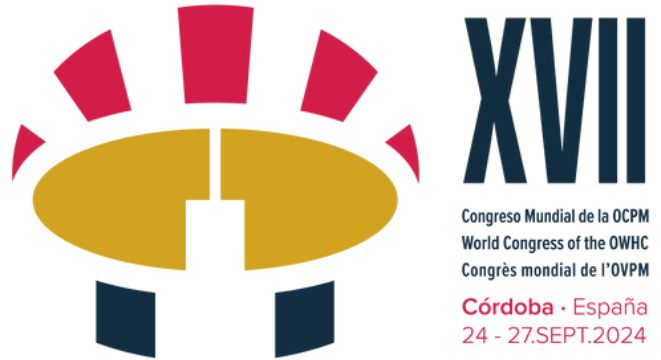
OVPM_OWHC_OCPM



OVPM / OWHC / OCPM

CORDOBA WORLD CONGRESS

The year 2023 was marked by the development of the Québec Roadmap and, in particular, the work of the Collaborative Networks. The results and assessments that emerged have helped to identify the major issues at stake that the OWHC cities have decided to address together, in order to offer their residents a better quality of life. It is under the theme of **livability** that OWHC cities are invited to meet in Cordoba, Spain, from September 24 to 27, 2024.





OVPM . OWHC . OCPM

Members of the General Secretariat team:

Mr. Mikhaël De Thyse,
Secretary General

Mrs. Andréanne Charest,
Programs and Projects Manager -
Deputy Secretary General

Ms. Leticia Sanches -
Urban Heritage Project Officer

Ms. Émilie Gourbin -
Urban Heritage Project Officer

Mr. Simon Laflamme -
Urban Heritage Project Officer

Mr. Jules Morel -
Communication and Visibility Project Officer

Ms Claire Lavoie -
Accounting and Administrative Assistant

OWHC head office:

Espace Quatre Cents
100, Quai Saint-André, Suite 140
Québec City, Quebec G1K 3Y2
Canada

+1 418 692-0000
secretariat@ovpm.org

Date of submission:

10/04/2024