



Heraklion, 7.11.2012

TO: The Conference of L' Aquila

**HELLENIC REPUBLIC
MUNICIPALITY OF HERAKLION
DIRECTION OF ORGANISATION,
EURPEAN PROGRAMMES AND
INFORMATICS**

NOTIF. :

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Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the Mayor of the Municipality of Heraklion Mr Kourakis,

I salute the final conference of P.A.T.C.H. Programme for the preservation of the European cultural heritage concerning Museums' exhibits, archives of Libraries, frescos and paintings of Cathedrales, icons of churches, traditional buildings and other cultural objects. It's the end of a two years work of many different partners with different issues of interest.

Our own issue as Municipality of Heraklion is the preservation of urban areas as traditional buildings and as urban fabric of the historical centre of our city. In spite the intensive efforts of our Municipality for many years, we could not achieve the maximum of success in order to restore the historical centre of Heraklion.

There are two reasons for that:

First is the centralisation of the procedures in order to approve new projects of restoration. The bureaucracy of the Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Environment is time wasting. The solution could come from the decentralisation of the procedures to the regional departments of these Ministries.

Second reason is the lack of funding. Today, in this austerity period, we cannot expect much from national funding for the restoration of our historic centre. Instead, we expect private investment to take over the restoration of individual buildings and we should facilitate these enterprises. What we can improve is to simplify the bureaucracy and the licensing procedure from the Municipal Services. We intend to claim the decentralisation of approval of Municipal projects from the governmental Ministries to the regional departments of the Region of Crete, because these projects are issues of regional interest and not of national scale.

This decentralisation should be the most important good practice for our Municipality in order to meet the goals of P.A.T.C.H. programme. We thank you for your support and collaboration and we congratulate all the partners for their technical work in this successful programme. Thank you