

05 July 2015

Hamburg's first World Heritage Site: Speicherstadt and Chilehaus with Kontorhaus District

UNESCO acknowledges the building ensemble's universal value

The UNESCO's World Heritage Committee has approved Hamburg's application for the "Speicherstadt and Chilehaus with Kontorhaus District" to be included in the UNESCO's World Heritage list. The decision was made at today's 39th Committee meeting, which was held in Bonn, Germany. The World Heritage Committee, which comprises 21 UNESCO member states, has been meeting since 28 June. The Committee acknowledged the site's outstanding universal value, and Hamburg now has its first World Heritage Site.

Hamburg's First Mayor Olaf Scholz comments: "I am absolutely delighted about this success. We, the people of Hamburg, can be proud of our city's new World Heritage Site "Speicherstadt and Chilehaus with Kontorhaus District". We have been able to convince the world's most high-ranking expert committee of the unique national and international role of the Speicherstadt and the Kontorhaus District. This unique role becomes particularly clear when comparing these sites with maritime warehouse complexes and modern office ensembles of the early 20th century in cities around the world. We are aware of this great honour and we will be happy to assume the responsibility to protect and convey this heritage."

Hamburg's Minister of Culture, Prof. Barbara Kisseler, states: "Hamburg's application succeeded in highlighting the Speicherstadt as the largest and most advanced logistics centre of its time – which is still the world's largest coherent uniform ensemble of warehouses today – and in highlighting the Kontorhaus District's worldwide impact on the evolution of office architecture. Hamburg has been involved in the application procedure since 1999. Our efforts throughout the past years have now paid off, and I am very grateful to all those involved. Today, this extraordinary ensemble serves as a lively link between the historic old town and the new HafenCity district. This UNESCO title adds an entirely new dimension to our efforts in providing an attractive city centre with diverse cultural options and a living historical identity. The title also offers great opportunities for Hamburg to further raise its profile internationally."

The World Heritage Committee based its decision on the belief that the Speicherstadt and the Kontorhaus District are "an outstanding example" of buildings and ensembles which "illustrate

significant stages in human history". The outstanding universal value of the two monofunctional but complementary areas is reflected in Hamburg's historic warehouse district with its connecting network of roads, canals and bridges dating from 1885 to 1927 and in the modern red-brick architecture of the office building ensembles for port-related use from the 1920s to 1940s.

Today's vote marks the end of a decision-making process stretching over several years. In 1999 the Chilehaus was the first to be included in Germany's tentative list seeking admission to the UNESCO World Heritage list. In 2007 the Speicherstadt and the Kontorhaus District were further added to the application. The nomination proposal was submitted to the World Heritage Centre in Paris in February 2014. The application dossier and the candidate site were subsequently assessed and evaluated by ICOMOS International. Most recently, Prof. Dr Maria Böhmer, current chair of the World Heritage Committee and Minister of State at the Federal Foreign Office, visited Hamburg to inquire about the application.

The official award ceremony is expected to take place in just over a year, when UNESCO will bestow the title on the Free and Hanseatic City of Hamburg. After this, Hamburg will continue to stay in close contact with UNESCO, and will appoint a dedicated UNESCO coordinator for these purposes. What is more, Hamburg has committed to establishing and operating a World Heritage information centre on the grounds of the site.

Further information: www.weltkulturerbe.hamburg

Further information on the Speicherstadt: www.hhla.de/en/history/speicherstadt.html

Information on the Chilehaus: <http://www.chilehaus.de/>

Press pictures: www.marketing.hamburg.de/unesco-world-heritage.html

Please see appendix for additional facts and figures on Hamburg's first World Heritage Site.

Media queries:

Enno Isermann

Hamburg Senate Press Office

Phone: +49 40 428 24 – 207

Mobile: +49 151 61 30 06 49

enno.isermann@kb.hamburg.de