

It is important to notice that the relative weights of equations (6), (7) and (8) are split into two groups. The weights of the opinions of new residents and of visitors are relatively lower than the other weights, since their range varies, approximately, from 11.1 to 12.7 percent, while the others vary from 16.4 to 20.6 percent. It is clear that the panellists scaled up the opinions of the specialists, longstanding residents and reference groups as the core stakeholders when it comes to evaluating the state of conservation of the sites, and minimized the importance of those of new residents and visitors.

These outcomes are aligned with the recent literature that evaluates the urban management process and stresses the importance of academic/experts/conservation ‘enthusiasts’, longstanding residents and cultural reference groups, as the literature argues that they are the main social actors in sustaining the conservation process (Zancheti and Hidaka, 2010).

The weights of Table 3 can be grouped in many ways so as to express the different contexts of particular WHS in relation to the importance of stakeholders in conserving such sites. There are many possibilities of constructing equations for the KPIs. They will depend on decisions taken at the local level, by the national and local officials, with the advice of the WHC/UNESCO in the case of the WH sites, and will take into consideration the complexity of the spatial, material, cultural, social, political and economic structure of the site and the country in which it is located. Certainly, the larger the range of stakeholders considered in the surveys for establishing the KPIs is, the more precisely the *Isc* is likely to express the progress toward the sustainability of heritage conservation.

Conclusion

The indicator for measuring the changes to the state of conservation of urban heritage sites (*Isc*) was designed to perform two functions and to answer three linked questions: Has the significance of the sites been maintained over time? Has the integrity of the attributes that convey the significance of the sites been maintained? Are these attributes authentic?

The *Isc* indicator permits the state of conservation of WHS to be monitored. This process must involve the participation of stakeholders and guarantee that their opinions are taken into account. It is an instrument that uses subjectivity to evaluate conservation, namely, the subjectivity of individuals, but within an inter-subjectivity controlled structure. It will help in assessing progress in the conservation of WHS, or in making comparisons between how well or otherwise the management of different sites is performed. It is a flexible instrument that can be adapted to the specific characteristics of sites and the groups of stakeholders involved with management. Therefore, it may be used for any site, independently of the geographical, cultural and