



PRESS RELEASE

STATE PROPERTY FEDERALISM: FORMER SAN GIMIGNANO PRISON FROM THE STATE TO THE LOCAL AUTHORITIES

First example of the free transfer of ownership of State Property to the Local Authorities with a restoration and enhancement project for the entire complex

San Gimignano, 29 November 2011 – Today, the deed of transfer of ownership free of charge was signed for the “Ex convento ed ex carcere di San Domenico” in San Gimignano, establishing the transfer of ownership of the entire estate from the State to the Municipality of San Gimignano to the Province of Siena and to the Region of Tuscany. The deed, signed by Mayor Giacomo Bassi, by the President of the Province Simone Bezzini, by the Regional Councillor for Culture Cristina Scaletti and by the Director of the Tuscany and Umbria Branch of the Agenzia del Demanio (State Property Agency) Stefano Lombardi, is the first example of the transfer of ownership of historical and artistic property from the State to the local authorities, pursuant to Article 5, Paragraph 5 of Legislative Decree No. 85 of 28 May 2010 pertaining to state property federalism.

This is a special procedure reserved for property belonging to the national cultural heritage; the ownership of which can be transferred to the local authorities through enhancement agreements that involve the redevelopment and functional restoration of the property.

The enhancement project – A former 13th century convent, which then became a prison in 1800 and has since been abandoned will form the new UNESCO World Heritage culture and tourism hub. Within an area of nearly 20,000 m² (approximately 8% of the historic centre), there will be an outside space for performances in the form of an open-air Theatre with a 1700-seat capacity in the area that was once the space for the prisoners’ ‘yard time’, an indoor museum, an area for shops and artisanal activities where the cells once were, an indoor space which will house the information and tourism promotion office, a conference room, an entire area dedicated to businesses for the restoration and promotion of typical local products and, finally, a space entirely devoted to local association activities.

A model for Italy – The deed signed today is the result of consultations held between all the institutions involved with a view to promoting the re-use of public heritage and providing concrete answers to the needs of the community and the territory. The transfer of ownership of the former San Gimignano prison is, in fact, the result of positive collaboration between the various levels of government and it is certainly a model of reference for the protection and enhancement of public heritage.