

## “Brusselization” is back in the heart of Brussels historic center!

Neo-classical and Art Deco buildings must be saved. [A petition has been launched.](#)

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A project of a new campus developed by the *Hogeschool Universiteit Brussel* involves the demolition of more than 6.000 square meters of neo-classical and Art deco heritage.

This group of buildings is located:

- On a touristic and historical itinerary (in front of the Belgian Comic Strip Center);
- Within a protection zone of listed buildings;
- And in an inhabited district already affected by several construction works;

The project of demolition has got Brussels Capital Region approval and the planning permission could be soon delivered.



### Which buildings and which famous architects are we talking about?

The heritage in danger is located at the corner of the streets *rue du Marais/rue des Sables*.

We can bring out two groups of buildings:

1. (*Rue du Marais*) **A long neo-classical façade** built in several phases from the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The different architects who took part

in this development have preserved a great coherence. High quality low-reliefs contribute to this homogeneity (amongst others, “putti” conceived by the famous sculptor **Isidore De Rudder**). The historical heart of this neo-classical frame has been conceived by **Edmond De Vigne**, a representative architect of the Eclecticism and the Historicism in Belgium. The building was built for the “Union Minière” which was a rich and a famous company.

2. (*Rue des Sables*) Art Deco buildings whose façades have been built by **Paul Saintenoy**, the architect of the famous “Old England” building (Art nouveau). From the objective point of view of the historical study (ordered by the promoters within a legal framework) **this Art Deco façade is one of the most beautiful in Brussels** and one of the most accomplished work of this architect.

Unfortunately these buildings are not listed but they are in a good state. They have indeed been restored in the 90’s! [Therefore a petition has been launched in November to raise awareness amongst Brussels’ people.](#)

**Given the lack of positive reaction to this call by the regional government and the regional civil servants, the petition must be now forwarded beyond Brussels’ borders and among lovers of arts and architecture history.** Brussels government can still avoid such a demolition/rebuilding project and decide to preserve this architectural heritage.

For more precise information about this heritage and the project of demolition/rebuilding three press releases and analyses have been written by the *Atelier de Recherche et d’Action Urbaines* since April 2013:

1. [Projet de nouveau campus - et de démolition! - de la HUB : au secours, les iconoclastes reviennent !](#) (25/04/2013)
2. [La HUB projetée de raser plus de 6000 m<sup>2</sup> de patrimoine au centre-ville](#) (15/09/2014)
3. [HUB : Les Monuments et Sites veulent la démolition d’une façade de Paul Saintenoy !](#) (30/09/2014)

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For further information do not hesitate to contact the ARAU Directrice, Ms. Pauthier, at the following number:  
**0032 477 33 03 78**

Atelier de Recherche et d’Action Urbaines asbl  
Boulevard Adolphe Max, 55  
B-1000 Bruxelles  
T. +32 2 219 33 45  
F. +32 2 219 86 75

[info@arau.org](mailto:info@arau.org)  
[www.arau.org](http://www.arau.org)