GUIDELINES
FOR THE INVOLVEMENT OF CITIZENS IN HISTORICAL SITES VALORISATION
DELIVERABLE D.T1.5.4
GUIDELINES FOR THE INVOLVEMENT OF CITIZENS IN HISTORICAL SITES VALORISATION

KNOWLEDGE

PILOT PROJECTS
1. GENOVA
2. LJUBLJANA
3. NÜRNBERG
4. BYDGOSZCZ
5. RIJEKA
6. ÚSTI NAD LABEM
7. MILANO
8. WARSAW

NETWORK OF STAKEHOLDERS

BENCHMARKING

ACTION

TOOLS
FORGET HERITAGE APP

INVOLVEMENT OF CITIZENS
CO-PLANNING WITH LOCAL AUTHORITIES

NEW FUNCTIONS
NEW FINANCIAL MODELS

SPECIAL CROSS-SECTORIAL TOOLS

MODEL DEVELOPMENT

DEVELOPMENT OF COMMUNICATION TOOLS
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1. PRELIMINARY REMARKS

European cities, despite their strong differences, still have a large presence of spaces and assets, inherited from a stratified past that has left clear marks both in historic centres and in suburbs.

Faced with a widespread lack of resources by public administrations and private individuals - unable to operate for the maintenance and valorisation of historic and cultural heritage assets - it is necessary to intervene on this heritage to counteract its degradation, more or less advanced, and so coping with what some call „heritage accumulation crisis”. The abandonment of heritage structures brings the forgetfulness of their value and the loss of their use (productive, social, cultural and economic), causing impoverishment of the social and cultural practices of urban space appropriation, as if it were a „physical heritage without destiny/destination”.

However, as in any crisis situation, overturning the point of view, the same elements that make the situation critical, can be captured as resources and opportunities. In that case, intervening with the concrete help from local and creative communities for the valorisation and revitalization of cultural and historic heritage, allows not only the rediscovery of the value of the goods in themselves but contributes to the strengthening of a value that is social, turistic, cultural and, last but not least, economic. Indeed, on the one hand, the involvement of local communities can serve as a flywheel for asset re-qualification thanks to the activities that, more or less organized, are being implemented; on the other hand, the same involvement leads to the strengthening of the local cultural identities and the consolidation of solid and cooperative communities. In this sense, the enhancement of the historical and cultural heritage of a city, through the involvement of new social subjects, such as young creative talents and professionals, can be interpreted as a positive element for the whole city, thus constituting a desired encouragement towards a larger touristic and economic development.

The valorisation of historical and cultural heritage is a mere „city’s right”. It is to be understood as a set of rules governing the spaces and its origins are to be found in the activity of public institutions but also in the direct involvement of the civil society community and individuals. In this case too, the key element is represented by the participation of all the actors involved in the revitalisation of the heritage. It amounts to a set of bottom-up common actions undertaken by associations and industries, and foresees the development of new models for use and management of the spaces.

Bottom-up involvement allows to activate fresh resources resulting from spontaneous and flexible processes, without a predetermined outcome from the beginning. In any case, these are actions capable of consolidating local communities and their relations with public institutions through new models of economic sustainability, new cultural offers, mixed business and association bodies and flexible relationships with public administrations. Many examples in Europe are now visible to everyone and can be operational references for all cities that intend to act in this direction.

These can be considered winning strategies because they focus resources and attentions on the process of change and on flexibility rather than on the final result to be achieved. The constant element is however represented by the concept of heritage as a „common good” of collective use whose responsibility can be also taken on by the citizenship, through various patrimonial forms in which public authorities plays, in any case a strong
coordination role. In fact, on the basis of resolutions, deliberations and partnership agreements between municipalities and citizens, it is possible to regulate the cooperation between authorities and local communities, even when these experiences are originated outside a precise regulatory framework, as in case of urban decorum, the management of deteriorated green spaces, the regeneration of spaces and buildings that have lost their original destination, etc.

Faced with the emerging of these activities from the bottom, institutions can act by producing innovative regulatory models that can formalize the existing relationships among Public Administrations and citizens.

Specifically, the administrations can „react“ to activities coming from the bottom and focused to take care of common goods with, at least, three models; these models - not necessarily alternative - are very different from each other, due to the degree of structuring in the formalisation of relations among institutions and local community.

In the first case, it is a precarious model, as public institutions admit the existence of experiences born out of a legal context and openly coexist with them by tolerating such experiences for a certain period of time, until they are integrated into a context of full legal ownership.

The second model, on the other hand, is more punctual as the city institutions take some decisions whereby some historical and cultural heritage goods are qualified as „urban civic goods“. In this case some collective organizations (associations, non-profit cooperatives, etc.) are able to manage these assets to ensure their collective enjoyment. Institutional action, through a deliberation, allows to intervene on the historical and cultural heritage of the city, while at the same time ensuring proper use for public purposes.

The third, more ambitious and structured then the foregoing ones, is based on the cooperation agreements signed by the local administrations and the citizens in order to enforce „special regulations“, which are specifically drafted, to legally regulate collaboration between local authorities and citizenship. These are therefore flexible tools that arise from an act of negotiation between public administrations and citizens, which allow local communities to intervene in a direct way for the general valorization of goods and urban spaces within a formal innovative legal framework.

These three models do not account for de-exposure of public bodies and a burden increase of private responsibility. This participatory way of acting consists of a set of new urban governance actions capable of putting in place a strong synergy between the different bearers of cultural interests, knowledge, cultural and creative experiences, under the guidance of local administrations, able to interpret the stakeholders’ representation and preserve their general interests.

The experimentation of such governance actions, based on participatory processes and aimed at enhancing the historical and cultural heritage of the city, are today „laboratories“ in which use and management patterns are experienced. These laboratories, notwithstanding the obvious limits of experimentation, have the ability to stop property values loss and to bring out values different from those strictly economical, in favor of cultural and social ones.
2. INTRODUCTION

The document „D.T.1.5.4 Guidelines for the citizens involvement in historical sites valorisation“ was co-written by a team from the Architecture and Design Department of University of Genoa and the Department for Culture of Municipality of Genoa.

The document is based on different contributions coming from Forget Heritage partners; in particularly „D.T.1.5.2 Local citizens needs analysis“ and „D.T.1.5.3 Local stakeholders involvement plans“. The Guidelines contents, as outlined below, provide a framework for interaction between urban governments and citizens and they will be endorsed by Forget Heritage project partners’ policy makers.

These Guidelines assume that, in order to develop an effective citizen involvement plan which enhances the historical and cultural heritage of the city, it is important to act on these three different levels:

![Knowledge](image1)

![Action](image2)

![Tools](image3)

To this aim an increased knowledge of all involved actors is foreseen, to put in place feasible actions and to prepare adequate involvement tools.
3. KNOWLEDGE

Knowledge is seen as the production and the availability of operational information about cultural and historical heritage that can be useful for local administrations, CCIs stakeholders and citizens.

It is often possible to observe a weak pre-operational knowledge in valorisation processes of all involved actors: on one hand Institutions are in a detached situation respect to the real artistic and cultural urban production; on the other the cultural operators and the artists haven’t the right information on the availability of the cultural heritage; moreover, it is hard for citizens to share their experiences and to invest personal skills and energies, because they are scared of the procedures complexity.

Knowledge means therefore to increase the relational abilities of a city latticework; only offering the possibility to create relationships, it is possible to encourage the use of a place or of an asset. These are hints for a knowledge increase:

3.a To carry out a census of both the unused or underused cultural and historical heritage (container) and cultural and artistic offers present on the territory (contents) and then create a combining tool.

These investigations are to be carried out in a participatory way among Public Administrators and Stakeholders in order to develop a coherent evaluation analysis, on a case-by-case basis, to find the best strategy to link „container“ and „content“.

These investigations should produce a mapping of the territory supply and demand.

3.b To organize a network which supports knowledge, contacts and relationships among the available „containers“, the proposed „contents“ and the mangers of historical and cultural heritage in order to allow a match between supply and demand able to make the management activities economically and socially sustainable.

This Network should be organized in a participatory way with local administrations and stakeholders.

The result would assume different structures (app, space on an institutional web site, accessible database, etc.)

3.c To include education plans, centred on the historical and cultural heritage of the territory, in the training programs of educational institutions at all levels. Getting the public to understand the value of historical and cultural heritage plays a key role in the building up of the identity of the territory, especially in younger people.

The result of the knowledge of a city’s historic and cultural heritage is represented by the young generations’ greater awareness who, by valuating the opportunity to use the territory’s available assets, can operate with concrete actions to tackle the urban decay.
4. ACTIONS

Actions proposed here below encompass concrete activities aimed at implementing stakeholders and citizens involvement in the issue of cultural and historical heritage valorization of their own city.

Activities and actions aimed to involve all actors in the valorisation of a city’s cultural and historical heritage must necessarily be integrated within a well-planned path.

This path must have a clear and defined structure but, at the same time, it must be flexible to adapt itself to the participatory process modifications. Changes are intrinsic in the participatory method.

The actions identified are effective only if supported by a strong political will to enhance the city’s cultural and historical heritage through local stakeholders’ involvement.

These are hints for possible actions:

4.a To implement stakeholders’ involvement in prioritization of defined actions lines, and in the strategies and tendencies outlined by a “Plan of cultural and historical heritage usage”. The valorization objective cannot exclude the necessity to combine the economic sustainability with the social benefit of actions foreseen for the heritage reuse.

That is, a Strategic Plan for the heritage valorisation must have a strong value of orientation and be shared by all the actors involved. Such a Strategic Plan, extended to the whole city, must necessarily provide sufficient time for the development of all ideas and all the expected actions. In other words, it must be a medium to long term plan, accordingly to a multi-level scheduling.

4.b To design, within the Strategic Plan, a necessary dedicated “Plan for the use of historical and cultural assets” which are under-used or unused. Temporary utilization activities, that can stop the degradation progress, have to be planned while waiting for the development of a specific requalification project and reuse of the asset, which clearly requires a longer time.

4.c To involve stakeholder in the definition of the evaluation criteria to be used for appointing the management of historic and cultural heritage assets; they should also be part of the resulting economic and time planning of management activities. Therefore, it is necessary to experiment shared models of heritage appointment, based on evaluation criteria which consider a collaboration among the creative and cultural operators, rather than a barren competition. This approach allows the specific competences of everyone to emerge, competences which, case by case, could be useful to reach the objective of a better and more useful valorisation of available assets. Moreover, the necessity for the creative/crafts sector operator to be organize themselves into organizations or associations with elected representatives is strong. In fact, this allows a quick and affective interaction with local public institutions and, above all, it avoids the involvement of each single operator in debate and organizational.
4.d To implement citizens and local communities' involvement strategies to identify activities which stimulate the cultural and historical heritage attractiveness improvement. That is, to experiment new relational models of solidarity among people of different age, genre, ethnicity in order to support, among the inhabitants, the birth of co-operation networks. Such approach activates public shared spaces, which consequently express innovative and experimental uses of the city thus representing an occasion for urban and social regeneration.

4.e To identify and experiment new public/private financial models in order to gain resources adequate to the needs arising from the re-use of historical and cultural heritage.

4.f To open a stable dialogue channel with cultural heritage asset owners, with the identification of management strategies allowing on the one hand to increase the public and collective use and on the other hand to meet the needs of the public administration owner of the assets, needing support in the property maintenance and restoration.

4.g To outline, at urban level, information and communication plans focusing on those historical and cultural heritage sites that are actually available and have a potential use in the near future.

4.h Organizing and developing concrete educational activities in schools at all levels, in order to stimulate the attention and curiosity of pupils and students towards the historical and cultural heritage of their own territory. For this purpose, training activities such as, for example, guided tours of historical and cultural heritage may be implemented (for example, guided tours for school students organized by the school itself. Also, other training activities, developed with the support of different sector's experts (tourism, land–use...) can be furthered in education institutions, in order to increase in students of all levels, the knowledge and the awareness of the local areas. This action is based on the idea of stressing, since the first years of education, the theme of valorisation and protection of cultural heritage).
5. TOOLS

The identified instruments represent the operational tools through which actions aiming at the involvement all actors in the valorisation of historical and cultural heritage can be carried out.

These tools must be innovative, dynamic and coherent with the work methods defined within the arranged Valorisation Strategic Plan(2a), Stakeholders involvement plans and Communication and Information Plan.

In order to implement and update the operational tools, a group working on the experiences and activities potentially useful for historical and cultural heritage valorisation purposes, must be activated.

These are hints for suitable tools:

5.a To identify tools for involving stakeholders (citizens and creative communities) in the definition of a new function of unused or under-used historical heritage which must be re-qualified, such as: project planning and/or planning activities, co-planning, co-design, etc.

5.b To define tools by which the Public Administration can guarantee the involvement of citizens as an ordinary administrative practice aimed at the cultural heritage valorisation.

As an example, to write Regulations of historical and cultural heritage shared use (or use the available existing plans/regulations), or to establish cooperation agreements among urban administrations and citizens.

5.c To define tools that Public Administration can adopt to simplify and make the cultural heritage regeneration processes more transparent. For example, define simplified bureaucratic procedures for the use of historical and cultural heritage assets above all for temporary activities.

5.d To define the most appropriate tools for develop an effective and solid Information and Communication Plan on cultural heritage valorisation. This Plan should reach all different urban targets related to the historical and cultural heritage valorisation.

In the plan outlining it is necessary to pay a special attention to the selection and the use of different communicative channels. For example, communications focused on the creative community (or citizens), general communications via ICT tools or more traditional channels (mass media), etc, depending on the different stakeholders' targets to be reached.
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