



## **INT-HERIT – IMPLEMENTATION NETWORK**

HERITAGE STRATEGIES IN SMALL AND MEDIUM- SIZED EUROPEAN CITIES

# OPERATIONAL IMPLEMENTATION FRAMEWORK

**{DODONI, GREECE}**



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## INTRODUCTION

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The INT-HERIT implementation network brings together a set of 9 small and medium-sized European cities around the common goal of revitalizing the local cultural heritage. In a context of crisis and institutional reorganization of local governments, the INT-HERIT cities are facing different challenges linked to the revitalization of cultural heritage. The network aims at implementing innovative models in the field of heritage management thanks to a set of integrated and sustainable local strategies. The URBACT Programme allows cities to learn from one another and to develop operational instruments for the implementation process of the local strategies.

The role of culture, heritage and creativity, and their relationship to economic development has been the subject of renewed attention in the European political agenda over the last four decades, in the context of the policy for competitiveness and sustainable development (e.g. the successful case of Bilbao).

Cultural heritage is a shared resource, and a common good. Like other such goods it can be vulnerable to over-exploitation and under-funding, which can result in neglect, decay and, in some cases, oblivion. Looking after our heritage is, therefore, our common responsibility. While heritage protection is primarily a matter for national, regional and local authorities, the European Union has a role to play in line with the EU Treaties and in respect of the principle of subsidiarity.

Cultural heritage is an economic factor capable of creating jobs, catalysing technical innovation and it has also been recognised as a useful tool for regional development. The social benefits that promote sustainability and also provide social cohesion and improve the quality of life of citizens are highlighted.

Culture plays an important role "in the productivity process of places", as well as in their differentiation and is also a connecting link between the rural and the urban and an inspiring element of initiatives linked with the economy of the experience (Harvey, 1989).

Dodoni (Greece) has designed a Strategic Plan for the promotion of cultural resources, particularly those in the archaeological site of Dodoni (III and IV centuries BC). The main objective of the strategic plan is a balanced display of the important cultural resources of Municipality of Dodoni and the promotion of cultural tourism in a way that will simultaneously achieve long-term and structural upgrade of the touristic product with sustainability and lasting development preconditions.

In a context of economic crisis, the municipality of Dodoni focuses on the world class heritage waiting to assist in promoting the development and in fighting against the depopulation of the region. For these aims, it has raised significant funds to implement a plan to valorise the magnificent ruins, place of the oldest oracle of ancient Greece. The archaeological site of Dodoni comprises the sanctuary of Zeus and the acropolis. Located at

the foot of the hill, the sanctuary is surrounded by an enclosure and the acropolis occupies the hilltop.

## 1.1. Baseline position

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In a context of an economic crisis, the municipality of Dodoni is taking steps to take advantage of the important cultural assets of the region. From the magnificent ancient theatre among the ruins of the important archaeological site of Dodoni (place of the oldest oracle of ancient Greece) to the rich cultural traditions of the 56 local communities, the region of Dodoni wants to develop cultural tourism by promoting and upgrading their current offer for lasting and sustainable impacts in the economy of the region.

The main objective of the strategic plan through the URBACT implementation network INT-HERIT, is a balanced valorisation of the important cultural resources of Municipality of Dodoni under sustainable tourism concept and support the creation or expansion of related businesses.

The plan pursues the following aims:

- The protection and preservation of cultural heritage sites for future generations,
- The enrichment of the cultural heritage through the development of local cultural activity,
- The evaluation of cultural differences and the improvement of intercultural conservation,
- The preservation of local customs and ecosystems and the enrichment of cultural identities,
- The harmonious combination of cultural and economic aspects of tourism,
- The sustainable development of tourism while offering considerable tourism experience for visitors.

The Municipality of Dodoni also participates in “MileSTONES” which is a Project co-funded by the European Union and the National Funds of Greece and Albania under the IPA Cross-Border Programme "Greece-Albania 2007-2013.

MileSTONES Project constitutes a targeted effort to protect and promote the cultural heritage in the cross-border area of Greece – Albania. It is implemented under the 2nd Call of the IPA Cross-border Programme “Greece – Albania 2007-2013” by the Municipality of Dodoni, as Lead Partner, in cooperation with the Municipality of Finiq, the Ephorate of Antiquities of Ioannina and the Regional Directory of National Culture of Saranda. The project focuses on the theatres of Dodoni and Finiq, two of the most important archaeological sites in the cross-border area.

The project is expected to contribute decisively to the protection and the enhancement of the two archaeological sites, forming the conditions for a sustainable cooperative network in culture, between Greece and Albania, using a bottom-up planning approach. In addition, the project will develop and promote an innovative, digital, cultural route, connecting Dodoni and the theatre of Finiq, which will include and highlight all the points of cultural interest in the cross-border area.

The result of the project is expected to contribute substantially to the main objective of MileSTONES, which is the protection and promotion of the area's cultural heritage within the frame of a special strategy of sustainable development which will improve the employment opportunities and economic growth, in respect to the environment and culture in a cross-border scale.

Furthermore, after entering the URBACT Network, the Municipality of Dodoni continued with the Project "MileSTONES II : Encouraging tourism development through the preservation and promotion of the cross border cultural and natural resources" which is a follow-up of the successful project "MileSTONES", approved under the IPA Cross-Border (CB) Programme "Greece-Albania 2014-2020".

MileSTONES II appears as an essence; a connection between the additional protection and preservation of the cultural CB assets and their promotion through sustainable tourism, utilizing existing assets, infrastructures and networks and applying innovative tools and techniques beyond current practices.

The Project emphasises on Finiq and Dodoni with small scale interventions such as the preservation of two Byzantine Churches and the establishment of two Innovation Cultural Promotion Spaces applying innovative tools and platforms within a result-oriented strategy to successfully promote the CB area, leveraging tourism development and driving sustainable economic growth.

MileSTONES II fully corresponds to the Programme area strengths and opportunities being the important cultural heritage and the common cultural characteristics, and provides solutions to the current weaknesses concerning the inadequate planning for mild types of tourism and the lack of a common action plan for tourist development.

The municipality of Dodoni is one of the eight municipalities of the prefecture of Ioannina, located southwest of the city of Ioannina. Dodoni's monuments, archaeological sites, museums, churches, mountain and riverside trails attract tourists. The municipality of Dodoni covers an area of 658,880 acres and a population of 10,130 inhabitants. Dodoni is a cultural and touristic centre in the Epirus Region of with many assets among which the ancient theatre of Dodoni, one of the biggest in Greece.

The region's economy is based primarily on agriculture and the stock farming sector. In recent years, agrotourism has developed and shelters along with restaurants have been created. A small part of the population produces and trades local products such as honey.



A trademark for the municipality of Dodoni is its archaeological site, one of the most important in Greece. This is where the Oracle was, which, according to Aristotle, is the cradle of Greek civilization.

Within the URBACT implementation network INT-HERIT which is working on heritage strategies in small and medium-sized European cities, the municipality of Dodoni aims at balancing the display of cultural resources and at promoting and upgrading cultural tourism in a sustainable way. The main target was rehabilitation and valorisation of the Dodoni Archaeological site while the main need was to use cultural heritage as a tool to foster development and fight depopulation of the city and measure the impact of PPP's policies.

The barriers that Dodoni had to face were the lack of conservation funds; the need of permissions to make any intervention hampers the capacity to operate changes; the accessibility issues (sites relatively distant from main touristic centres); the type of project was highly dependent on the funds raised; lack of governance in vertical integration; conservation constraints and legal restrictions limit the available options for reuse; historical sites require specific technical skills (e.g. archaeology, UNESCO management plan, site management during renovation, etc); existent management model could limit the type of planned new functions.

The needs of Dodoni were: a marketing and communication plan for promotion of sites; developing new forms of PPP's and Public – social partnerships; the integration and connection between cultural resources; active fund raising via new sponsorship agreements; proactive involvement of the private sector (PPP's); improve shopping urban districts; foster participation of the local community; an integrated governance model (fostering participation of the local community and better integration among departments); need of external assistance to build and efficient model with a participatory methodology; technical tools (e.g. assistance for operational management of sites; guidelines for public spaces about use and street furniture)

The challenges for Dodoni were:

- Prolonging the time spent in town by visitors;
- Meaningful involvement of local stakeholders in the ULG;
- Building an integrated approach;
- Building a MIX WORKING GROUP (with Local authorities + Retailers associations + Private owners);
- Find new business models for PPP's capable of assuring longterm sustainability of sites;
- Integration of the regenerated sites in the surrounding area;
- Involving stakeholders at national level for added value;
- Attractiveness – Build lively sites – Better quality of life;
- Working with sponsoring organisations (patronage).



The problems that have motivated Dodoni to enter this Urbact Implementation Network which the city felt that could better handled within the context of a EU network are the following:

- the protection and preservation of cultural heritage sites for future generations;
- the enrichment of the cultural heritage through the development of local cultural activity;
- the evaluation of cultural differences and the improvement of intercultural conservation;
- the preservation of local customs and ecosystems and the enrichment of cultural identities;
- the harmonious combination of cultural and economic aspects of tourism;
- the sustainable development of tourism while offering considerable tourism experience for visitors.

The city expected to achieve the following from the participation in Urbact:

- Establishing the Municipality of Dodoni and the archaeological site of Dodoni as a tourist destination;
- Upgrading and promoting the tourism product of Municipality of Dodoni - Enhancing Accessibility;
- Improvement of tourism services;
- Protection, management and maintenance of the Natural Environment for the benefit of tourist development;
- Powerful and targeted display, promotion and dissemination of the tourist product of the municipality of Dodoni in Greece and abroad;
- Attracting tourists from new and / or existing markets and setting common goals.

## 1.2. Outline Implementation Plan

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The actions planned are focused in "Protecting, Promoting and Developing Cultural Heritage" building a network dedicated to the promotion of entrepreneurship, facilitating the exploitation of new ideas and stimulating the creation of new enterprises and the development of new business models and an increasing of investment in human capital. The conservation of a historic, urban, monumental and industrial heritage is the objective from which all these actions come from.

The main actions that Dodoni planed are:

- Establishing the Municipality of Dodoni and the archaeological site of Dodoni as a tourist destination (522.318€)



- Upgrading and promoting the tourism product of Dodoni Municipality - Enhancing Accessibility (182.000€)
- Protection, management and maintenance of the Natural Environment for the benefit of tourist development (100.000€)
- Powerful and targeted display, promotion and dissemination of the tourist product of the municipality of Dodoni in Greece and abroad. Attracting tourists from new and / or existing markets and setting common goals (115.300€).

The historic and cultural importance of the ancient Greek theatre of Dodoni makes it the main attraction of the region. However the region has much more to offer and a good promotion strategy is required to extend the stay of visitors from the 2 –hour visiting to a weeklong stay. Among them some should be highlighted:

- Museums such as the Folklore Museum of Polygyros (traditional objects and costumes that mirror the history and the traditions of Dodoni are exposed), the Folklore Museum of Meliggoi, the Experiential Folklore Museum of Perdika, the War Museum 1912- 1913 (photos of military operations, uniforms and various military relics are exposed).
- Churches, like church of Agia Kiriaki, church of Agios Nikolaos, church of Agia Paraskevi, church of St. Ioannis Prodromos.
- Other archaeological sites, like "Emin Aga" Chani, Citadel of Kopani, Citadel of Myrodafni, Watermill, Stone bridge at the point of "Megas Lakkos".
- Mountain trails in Olytsika and riverside trails in Acheron.
- Traditions, strong and rich traditions such as the making of "tsipouro" a traditional drink.

### 1.3. Response to the Implementation Challenges

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*This section documents how Dodoni responded to the various challenges that faced during the lifetime of the implementation network.*

#### **1. Ensuring the integrated approach in the delivery of the strategy and their related actions/projects**

Showing-off the local cultural heritage and the promotion of the Municipality of Dodoni as a touristic destination is expected to assist in the development of local economy and the reinforcement of the local competitiveness. The development of new, alternative ways of tourism is expected to add big potential for the growth of the area, as well as to create new employment opportunities to the sectors of tourism, gastronomy, to the enterprises that create local products, to the agrotourism, etc.

Furthermore, this improvement of the whole area is making it more attractive to new investments for infrastructures, as well as an economic and social cohesion, a fact that is crucial for the areas that counter a demographic and population reduction.

To add with, the creation of new job opportunities will make the residents of the countryside and the highlands stay and not to abandon it, reducing the immigration and urbanization. The territorial development combines the protection and the promotion of the environment, but also contributes in the sensitization of the residents about the protection of the environment and the cultural heritage. The utilization of the local wealth is managed by enterprises that do not ignore the cultural heritage. Thus, the local community has the ability to develop and maintain the folklore, the local architecture, the revival of the old-fashioned ways and arts to produce the local products, local customs and traditions and to organise cultural events.

All the above maintain and avoid the deformation of the area, promoting its unique characteristics. The Municipality of Dodoni is constantly looking for new cooperation for the joint project development and implementation in the fields of culture and tourism. In this framework, it has signed a cooperation memorandum with the Municipality of Finiq (Albania) and the responsible Ephorate of Antiquities of Ioannina and Vlore, as it was mentioned before. Its purpose is the protection and promotion of the cultural heritage in cross- border area, with emphasis on ancient theatres of Dodoni and Finiq.

Moreover, it has started a new cooperation with the Hoteliers Association of Ioannina for the promotion of the assets of Dodoni. The cooperation with the Cultural Centre of Municipality of Dodoni and the cultural associations is constant, since they collaborate in organizing events and festivals in the field of culture.

Alongside the development of the cultural tourism, it is expected to take place some positive outcomes of other alternative tourism, such as the gastronomic, the peripatetic, but also sectors like housing, craft industries, structuring, social services, transportations, commerce, etc.

To end with, it is a necessary prerequisite that the success of the venture is the planning of the development of tourism of the area in terms of sustainability and sustainable development.

## **2. Maintaining involvement of local stakeholders and organising decision making for delivery**

The goal setting process is the result of a consultation, brainstorming and synergy process between Local Government bodies, social organisations and local community representatives. The whole strategic plan is supported by the municipal council.

## **3. Setting up efficient indicators & monitoring systems to measure performance**

The Municipality of Dodoni presents infinite possibilities of exploiting cultural, historical, natural and gastronomic reserve. The main objective of the strategic plan is a balanced display of the cultural resources of municipality of Dodoni and the promotion of cultural



tourism in a way that will simultaneously achieve long-term and structural upgrading of the tourism product with sustainability and lasting development preconditions.

The measuring impact could be:

- Number of heritage monuments restored and reused
- Number of cultural events taking place in Dodoni
- Increasing the number of Greek visitors
- Increasing the number of foreign tourists
- Expanding the days of vacation in the area (+days)
- Number of small creative businesses established in the area
- Number of private investment attracted
- Increasing the income for local residents thanks to alternative ways of tourism
- Increasing the number of new residents who will stay permanently in the area.

#### 1.4. Learning Journey

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*This is a review and illustration of what happens during the IN project, how the approach is formed and develops, how new things are learnt and applied, what works and what doesn't, what was learnt from that etc.*

Cultural heritage is an important factor to foster socio-economic development in the EU. On the aftermath of the economic crisis, EU cities are looking for knowledge and tools to better explore their cultural assets and projects such as INT-HERIT will definitely provide the leverage to move cities into a new level of cultural heritage management.

This strategy is particularly important for small to medium-size cities with a less developed industrial sector but with important cultural heritage assets which they find hard to valorise due to the lack of resources and know-how. With an important patrimony to regenerate and valorise the cities in the INT-HERIT consortium will highly benefit from a specifically designed project where the constraints of being small are properly addressed in order to fully exploit the socio-economic potential of their cultural heritage.

Certainly, today is undeniable that cultural heritage is an important asset of every city and a tool to foster development but almost everyone agrees that without a management model to fully explore its benefits (e.g. in tourism, social inclusion, etc), projects fall short to get the foreseen results and most of time with the finish line in sight.

In brief, Dodoni used the INT-HERIT Implementation Network to build a sustainable and dynamic management model. Dodoni has important cultural heritage assets with great economical potential to promote economic development (wellbeing, tourism, entrepreneurship, creative sector, social inclusion, etc). It differentiates from big cities by showing lack of critical mass, resources and knowhow to fully exploit this potential. It has



done and plans to do important investments in regeneration projects in the city. The INT-HERIT project provides innovative approaches to its management and will hopefully be integrated in the city practice for future implementations.

Through the Urbact Network the following have been learned and have been used at local level. Indisputably, the local cultural heritage and the promotion of the Municipality of Dodoni as a touristic destination is expected to assist in the development of local economy and the reinforcement of the local competitiveness. The development of new, alternative ways of tourism is expected to add big potential for the growth of the area, as well as to create new employment opportunities to the sectors of tourism, gastronomy, to the enterprises which create local products, to the agro-tourism, etc.

Furthermore, this improvement of the whole area is making it more attractive to new investments for infrastructures, as well as an economic and social cohesion, a fact that is crucial for the areas that counter a demographic and population reduction. In addition, the creation of new job opportunities will make the residents of the countryside and the highlands stay and not to abandon it, reducing the immigration and urbanization.

The territorial development combines the protection and the promotion of the environment, but also contributes in the sensitization of the residents about the protection of the environment and the cultural heritage.

The valorisation of the local wealth is managed by enterprises which do not ignore the cultural heritage. Thus, the local community has the ability to develop and maintain the folklore, the local architecture, the revival of the old-fashioned ways and arts to produce the local products, local customs and traditions and to organize cultural events.

Alongside the development of the cultural tourism, is expected to have some positive outcome of other alternative tourism, such as the gastronomic, the peripatetic, but also sectors like housing, craft industries, structuring, social services, transportations, commerce, etc.

## 1.5. Synthesis

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*This final section looks at how specific challenges were tackled in practice and what skills, methods, tools were used to do so. What will this mean for the future? What Dodoni has learnt and what may be relevant to other cities.*

The first great challenge that the Municipality of Dodoni had to tackle was that it has the highest senior citizen rate in the country along with a huge problem of lack of services for their welfare, while the elders also confront the low accessibility to health infrastructure and benefits. Moreover, the municipality has the necessity of infrastructure for disabled people and for staff with expertise. On the other hand, there is a monumental cultural heritage that is not exploited to the maximum, whilst it constitutes a great advantage for Dodoni. Because of the above mentioned issues and because the existing social functions are unable to seize the possible potentials on their own, the Municipality of Dodoni decided to support and promote the idea of the establishment of Social Cooperative Enterprises (SCE). The establishment and development of the social enterprises is supported by the Social Enterprise Ecosystem in Greece (SEE-GR) initiative.

The project concerning the startup of Social Cooperative Enterprises offers a variety of opportunities for the improvement and the support of the aforementioned issues. The two proposed categories of SCE are: (a) "Social Care Cooperative Societies", which are concerned with the production and provision of social welfare services to specific population groups such as the seniors and the people with disabilities, (b) "Social Cooperative Societies of Collective and Productive Purpose", which concern the production of services to meet the needs of collectivity by promoting the local cultural heritage, promoting employment, strengthening social cohesion and strengthening local and regional development.

As the Municipality of Dodoni has the highest senior citizen rate in the country along with a huge problem of lack of services and infrastructure, the founding of a Social Care Cooperative Society for the seniors and the people with disabilities:

- Provides care for the people with special needs.
- Provides creative employment for people with disabilities in all forms and degrees of disability.
- Provides psychological counseling and support.
- Provides educational programs for people with disabilities, environmental education, and intercultural education.
- Escort for senior people for day-to-day activities, cultural events and socialization actions.
- Provides nursing services and buy medicines.



- Creates new work positions.  
As the Municipality of Dodoni has a great cultural heritage with the archaeological site and the monuments, establishing a Social Cooperative Society oriented in touristic:
- Renders touristic services
- Promotes the local culture and products in a professional and more organized manner
- Creates new work positions

The strategy of the project for the startup of Social Cooperative Enterprises ensures a sustainable and integrated approach from the very start of the process. While the social system of the Municipality cannot cover the need that exists in social services, because there is a lack of funds, experts, infrastructure and personnel, establishing the SCEs with the support of the Municipality of Dodoni will fill in these gaps. The sustainability of the project is ensured while the SCEs are social and solidarity economy bodies which are non-single-person legal entities and are administered on an equal footing by their members. All the economic activities are based on an alternative form of organization of relations of production, distribution, consumption and reinvestment, based on the principles of democracy, equality, solidarity, cooperation and respect for man and environment. They apply a system of convergence in pay and quotas in the distribution of profits with the ultimate purpose of developing activities of collective and social benefit.

All EU cities could use this kind of approach as it will give them the opportunity to reinforce and develop their communities. These models of Social Enterprises use a sustainable approach to help the citizens and the municipality by responding to the demand, as well as, at the same time new work positions are created. In this way the costs, both economic and of Human Resources, for the administration is greatly reduced, if not completely, while the object of the action remains of public domain with all the advantages for the city related to this aspect. The participatory approach in the process is also very important, as it raises the awareness of the citizens. The cooperation between public and private sector could be hard at times, but if it is successful it could bring great results to a city and its heritage in terms of innovation and sustainability.

The second great challenge that the Municipality of Dodoni had to tackle was that a major administrative reform in Greece named The Kallikratis Programme brought a major reform of the country's administrative divisions. The Kallikratis Programme further reduced the number of self-governing local administrative units by compulsory merging the 1033 municipalities and communities which the Kapodistrias reform had already amalgamated to just 325 municipalities.

The Municipality of Dodoni consists of 56 small villages and the whole area is characterized by the abundance of ancient monuments which depict the depth of history and prove that the area presents an outstanding interest.

The municipality of Dodoni hosts the Ancient Theatre of Dodoni, a cultural monument of archaeological value globally. Dodoni's archaeological site, is one of the most important in Greece and it is where the Oracle was, which, according to Aristotle is "the cradle of Greek civilization". The area is surrounded by the river Acheron which is of outstanding beauty and a source of important information and knowledge in the field of environmental education. Both the narrows and the estuaries of Acheron and its surrounding area belong to the European network of protected nature areas 2000 (Natura 2000). There are also paths which give access to natural and cultural heritage and give added value to environmental connectivity. The "passes of the Acheron", "the gates of Ades", is a place of outstanding natural beauty and of great importance. Moreover, folk museums, churches and monasteries, stone bridges and traditional watermills are some of the special elements that the municipality can display.

The abovementioned cultural heritage is spread in all the area of the Municipality. Hence, the case was if a participatory approach can overcome the hurdles faced by a municipality composed of 56 small villages and tackle cultural heritage challenges since there is no local authority able to coordinate and direct all these remoted villages and there is not enough funding.

Participatory management is about strengthening the relationship between cultural heritage institutions and professionals, and everyone interested or engaged in cultural heritage – civil society, the public, owners, caretakers, businesses, etc. In the case of Dodoni associations play an important role in keeping traditions and they need to collaborate in the running of the local museums.

The solution that was proposed is a mechanism able to have a holistic management approach and direct the collaboration of the villages. More specifically the suggested model was Crowdsourcing. The word crowdsourcing itself is a portmanteau of crowd and outsourcing. Crowdsourcing is a type of participative online activity in which an individual, an institution, a nonprofit organization, or company proposes to a group of individuals of varying knowledge, heterogeneity, and number, via a flexible open call, the voluntary undertaking of a task. The undertaking of the task, is of variable complexity and modularity. The crowd should participate by bringing their work, money, knowledge and/or experience, which always entails mutual benefit.

The model is based on an online platform, under the auspices of the municipality, which is accessible by all the citizens. The Municipality broadcasts problems to the public, and an open call for contributions to help solve the problem and vice versa. Members of the public submit solutions to contribute.

All EU cities could use this kind of approach as it will give them the opportunity to reinforce and develop their communities. This model uses a sustainable approach to help the citizens and the municipality by responding to the demand.

In this way the cost, both economic and of Human Resources, for the administration is greatly reduced, if not completely, while the object of the action remains of public domain with all the advantages for the place related to this aspect. The participatory approach in the process is also very important, as it raises the awareness of the citizens. The cooperation between the Municipality and the people leaving in all the remoted villages could be hard in the beginning, but if it is successful it could bring great results to a city and its heritage in terms of innovation and sustainability.

