Workshop 2 - Heritage-led Rural and Urban Regeneration

Why a European Vision paper for urban and rural regeneration through CNH?

The H2020 call "*SC5-21-2016-2017: cultural heritage as a driver for sustainable growth*" was launched in 2016 and it was the only call within H2020 to focus on the potential of Cultural and Natural Heritage (CNH) as a main driver of regeneration of rural and urban areas.

Two projects have been funded under this call: ROCK, on heritage led urban regeneration and RURITAGE, focusing on heritage-ed rural regeneration.

RURITAGE is a four-year-long EU-funded research project, initiated in June 2018, which strives to enable rural regeneration through cultural heritage for enhancing regional and community development. To this aim, RURITAGE identifies 6 Systemic Innovation Areas (Pilgrimage, Resilience, Sustainable Local Food Production, Integrated Landscape Management, Migration and Art and Festivals) whose intersections constitute a European model of heritage-led rural development.

ROCK focuses on historic city centres as extraordinary laboratories to demonstrate how Cultural Heritage [CH] can be a unique and powerful engine of regeneration, sustainable development and economic growth for the whole city. ROCK aims to support the transformation of historic city centres afflicted by physical decay, social conflicts and poor life quality into Creative and Sustainable Districts through shared generation of new sustainable environmental, social, economic processes. ROCK aims to develop an innovative, collaborative and systemic approach to promote the effective regeneration and adaptive reuse in historic city centres by implementing a repertoire of successful heritage-led regeneration initiatives related to 7 Role Model selected cities: Athens, Cluj-Napoca, Eindhoven, Liverpool, Lyon, Turin and Vilnius. The replicability and effectiveness of the approach and of the related models in addressing the specific needs of historic city centres and in integrating site management plans with associated financing mechanisms will be tested in 3 Replicator Cities: Bologna, Lisbon and Skopje.

Acknowledging the common goal of boosting regeneration through cultural heritage, RURITAGE has invited ROCK to join the forces to discuss and analyse complementarities and differences of using tangible and intangible cultural heritage as a driver for sustainable growth in rural and urban areas.

Three common topics have been identified and will be discusses in just as many groups during the workshop, with the aim to share experiences, approaches, visions from the other EU funded projects on the topic of cultural heritage and from experts in CH and stakeholders, to build a vision paper for urban and rural regeneration through cultural heritage to be lauched in May 2020.

1_Heritage to build resilience – focus on a wider understanding of the resilience topic, as community resilience

The concept of resilience attracted much attention in the last decade. Resilience has mostly been related with either individual psychological resilience after a personal shock or resilience to natural disaster. In this context, and thanks to our experience thorough RURITAGE approach, we explore the ideas of an integrated approach towards true and long-lasting community socio-economic resilience.

We emphasise the idea of identifying and developing community strengths, and building resilience through participatory and participated processes, with attention to people–place connections, values and beliefs, knowledge and learning, community planning, social networks, collaborative governance, economic diversification, infrastructure and leadership (Berkes 2012). Particularly, the overall context of values, beliefs, sense of place and traditions represent the intangible heritage that community should build on to increase and strengthen their resilience.

Q1: How can community resilience be strengthened through CNH?
Q2: Tangible and intangible heritage for resilience, common or diverse approaches?

Hints for discussion: overall concept of resilience, community building, participatory processes, intangible heritage and local traditions for resilience, co-mapping of hazards and participatory representation of the area, tangible heritage for resilience

2_Heritage for social inclusion – vulnerable groups, migrants, access to cultural heritage and to culture in general

As mentioned in the 'European Framework for Action on Cultural Heritage', to make the most of its potential, the widest possible access to cultural heritage, in all its forms, must be ensured for all people. This includes those who are economically disadvantaged, socially deprived or persons with reduced mobility or disabilities. Accessibility has mostly been considered in terms of physical accessibility to tangible heritage, where much has been done, even though too many places remain not accessible for some parts of the population.

Accessibility, in our understanding, has a broader meaning, including very different shades ranging from economic accessibility (cost of culture) to social accessibility (vulnerable groups excluded from cultural events and activities) to intangible heritage accessibility (access to local culture, traditions and knowledge).

Boosting access to culture and cultural heritage to all, rediscover and redesign heritage through an inclusive and participatory process, will strongly contribute to create more just and inclusive society, using heritage as a mean to boost inclusion and foster a common understanding.

Q1: What is the priority in terms of accessibility to CNH from your experience?
Q2: Which are the most vulnerable and excluded groups?
Q3: ICT, economic incentives and participation, how to integrate these different approaches to create a really inclusive approach?

Hints for discussion: Education, learning and training, participation, co-development of events, co-development of heritage, co-ownership, better infrastructures, use of ICT (social media, virtual reality and artificial intelligence, videos, etc.) economic incentives for inclusive accessibility

3_Heritage, culture and creativity for local sustainable development

Cultural heritage is not only a burden inherited from the past, to be preserved intact for future generations. It also has the potential to engender new forms of collaboration and cultural production, to support cities and rural areas to cope with future challenges.

Cultural events and festivals can temporarily reactivate diverse areas through the injection of external audiences and new uses. Nevertheless, by themselves, they don't produce permanent transformations, or they do not necessarily benefit local population. It is crucial for public and private institutions to collaborate on the basis of a shared vision, setting up common goals, a common agenda and the standard tools and procedures to achieve them. It is necessary that public authorities, universities, museums, theatres and other cultural institution define agreements towards the simplification of administrative protocols, the transfer of knowledge and the sharing of (human) resources. Public tenders and procurement for cultural productions, events and festivals should be based on a series of guidelines and regulation that ensure that the events meet the strategic objectives, while keeping the requirements for the preservation of historical artefacts, environmental and social sustainability. These rules and guidelines should be possibly co-designed with the local community.

Cultural production should not only be top-down operation based on the work of the curators and producers working for established institutions, but rather as a common good, which has to be managed collectively. For this reason, there is a need to set up a local ecosystem of independent cultural producers, cultural operators, artists, and inhabitants.

Q1 How can events, art and festival become part of a generalised strategy of urban and rural regeneration?
Q2 Hot to support communities of creatives, small local cultural producers?
Q3 How can we better monitor the social and environmental impacts of events and festivals?

Hints: activation of PPPPs, micro-financing actions, activation of alliances among institutions, co-designing rules for procurement and guidelines tenders for cultural production