

A group of people, including men and women, are seated at a table in what appears to be a meeting or conference room. Some individuals are wearing headsets, suggesting a focus on audio or communication. They are all looking towards the left side of the frame. The image has a soft, slightly blurred quality, and the text is overlaid in a bold, orange font.

# The KAIRÓS journey on heritage-driven urban regeneration

IAP final report

The KAIRÓS journey on heritage-driven urban regeneration  
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### **KAIRÓS, Heritage as Urban Regeneration**

KAIRÓS is an URBACT Action Planning Network led by Mula [ES] and joined by Šibenik [HR] Ukmergė [LT] Cesena [IT] Heraklion [EL] Belene [BG] and Malbork [PL]. It has focused on expanding the role of cultural heritage as a driver for sustainable urban development and regeneration.

KAIRÓS is a word in ancient Greek meaning the right time and conditions for moving into action.



## Content

The KAIRÓS momentum: igniting the change .....	4
Assessing the opportunities for cross-learning .....	6
A learning itinerary adaptable to unpredictable circumstances.....	8
Extending the discussion beyond the network .....	11
The KAIRÓS roadmaps to local action planning .....	12
Small-scale actions feeding the process.....	13
Partner cities review each other .....	15
Resulting action plans.....	18
Placing the IAP within the existing planning framework .....	24
Mayors' involvement.....	25
A refined integrated approach for urban heritage.....	27

## The KAIRÓS momentum: igniting the change

KAIRÓS was designed with a twofold aim. Internationally, to produce new knowledge, with the ambition to move the state of the art forward with regard to heritage-led urban development and regeneration. Locally, to have an impact, by driving relevant action planning while fostering the participatory approach.

It has meant a **conceptualisation effort**, on maximizing the role of cultural heritage as a driver for urban development and urban regeneration; and this is largely about taking full advantage of two major changes that are impacting the heritage field over the past years. First major change is a change of scale, as the spotlight is not so focused now on the single building and the monumental artefact, but also on the urban fabric. It has led to a number of emerging concepts, such as historical urban landscape, urban heritage and heritage city. The second and most importantly is a change of purpose, meaning that valorisation matters as much as preservation nowadays. Valorisation means giving cultural heritage a new life or enhancing it, in terms of use and function. Thus, rather than a stock of the past, heritage is now addressed as a history of transitions —living memory— therefore also valuable to make the contemporary city.

Ultimately, both changes have led to a change of method. That is, as a result of the above, heritage is increasingly addressed at the crossroads of several fields —e.g. culture, urban planning, tourism, society and wellbeing, economic development. Consequently, an integrated approach is needed more than ever to tackle the multi-faceted nature of heritage valorisation. All these changes are converging on the idea of heritage-driven urban development and regeneration.

Upon these assumptions, seven medium-sized cities —Mula [Spain], Šibenik [Croatia], Ukmergė [Lithuania], Cesena [Italy], Heraklion [Greece], Belene [Bulgaria] and Malbork [Poland]— promoted KAIRÓS as an URBACT Action Planning Network. The ambition was to build up and test the aforementioned integrated approach by assembling five key dimensions —Space, Economy, Attractiveness, Social Cohesion and Governance— in order to fully exploit the potential of heritage as a driver for sustainable urban development.

We called this approach the **KAIRÓS five-pillar model**<sup>1</sup>, which, after two years of international peer learning feeding local action planning, has proven to be workable to respond to a variety of different circumstances and local needs. Those different circumstances can be summed up into three types:

“ We already bring some experience in heritage-led urban development and regeneration and would like to deepen into this, testing new concepts and approaches.  
**Featuring Sibenik [HR] and Cesena [IT]**

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<sup>1</sup> See the Network Final Product “Making Heritage Work for Sustainable Urban Development. The KAIRÓS Five-Pillar Model”.

“ We are addressing a clear problem of dereliction and decline in a specific historic quarter. Therefore, we want to organize a comprehensive and innovative framework focusing on this target area.

**Featuring Mula [ES], Heraklion [EL] and Ukmergė [LT]**

“ Our main problem is not so much about dereliction but the need to fully exploit the potential of a number of heritage landmarks as a driver for city development.

**Featuring Malbork [PL] and Belene [BG]**

For instance, Cesena’s Integrated Action Plan, called “The City Gate”, aims to reuse the city’s industrial legacy [the former Arrigoni factory complex] as the spatial foundation for the re-development of the area surrounding the train station. Heraklion, the administrative capital of Crete, is facing a prototypical problem of dereliction, shrinking population and social problems in the historic quarter of Aghia Triada. The challenge for Malbork is nonetheless quite different. Malbork’s destination experience is reduced to visiting the iconic Teutonic castle [UNESCO World Heritage Site and one of the most visited tourist attractions in Poland], which has a little impact on the local economy and underestimates other cultural landmarks. A city perspective was therefore needed in Malbork to look at its heritage differently, and the five-pillar model has proven to be a useful framework for that.



## Assessing the opportunities for cross-learning

A number of aspects have contributed to make the KAIRÓS peer-learning distinctive. For instance, its adaptability to unpredictable circumstances, the enlargement of the discussion far beyond the network, and the ex-ante assessment of the opportunities for cross-learning. This later was a conscious exercise, based on questionnaire, resulting in an accurate mapping by crossing the “*who can contribute more to what*” with the “*who is in most need of what*”, once assumed that URBACT APNs are asymmetric by nature.

RELEVANCE OF THE KAIRÓS SUB-THEMES AND POTENTIAL FOR CROSS-LEARNING  
Self-assessment by the partner cities [\*]

Sub-themes and topics	Relevance	Background and experience			
	1-5	Inexperienced	Beginner	Experienced performer	Innovator
<b>Space   Urban planning and urban design in the heritage city</b>					
Urban planning at the heritage city	4		4	4	
Cultural urban landscape as policy concept	4	2	4	2	
Preservation and adaptive reuse of built heritage	4	1	4	3	
Managing vacant spaces and abandoned buildings	4	3	5		
Urban lighting. Shaping nocturnal landscapes	3	4	3	1	
Urban furniture, street art	3	2	5	1	
Addressing multi-functional historic centres	4	2	4	2	
New urban workplaces	4	4	2	2	
Electric vehicle, parking, pedestrianisation, last mile logistics...	5	1	5	1	1
Digitisation and smart heritage	4	4	1	2	
Eco-construcción, energy efficiency, waste management, circularity...	3	2	3	3	

Sub-themes and topics	Relevance	Background and experience			
	1-5	Inexperienced	Beginner	Experienced performer	Innovator
<b>Economy   Heritage as a driver for innovation, entrepreneurship and job creation</b>					
Entrepreneurship & support tools related to heritage and regeneration	4	1	7		
Local creative ecosystem: cultural and creative industries	4	3	3	2	
Heritage-applied innovations and technologies	4	4	3	1	

Heritage-based investment attraction	5	3	2	3	
Revamped mature industries and emerging activities linked to heritage	3	6	2		
Urban manufacturing at historic downtowns. Maker movement...	4	5	3		
Local labour market and employability	4	2	4	2	

Sub-themes and topics	Relevance	Background and experience			
	1-5	Inexperienced	Beginner	Experienced performer	Innovator
<b>Attractiveness   Re-imagining the heritage city: from local identity to destination management</b>					
Branding the heritage city: narrative, storytelling and communications	5		4	4	
Boosting attractiveness in mid-sized [peripheral] towns	4	1	6	1	
Addressing the visitor economy	4	4	3	1	
Tourism and retailing as levers to urban vibrancy	4	2	3	2	1
Events and cultural agenda as catalysts	4		2	6	
Destination management in the era of massive tourism	4	1	4	3	

Sub-themes and topics	Relevance	Background and experience			
	1-5	Inexperienced	Beginner	Experienced performer	Innovator
<b>Social cohesion   Accessibility and inclusiveness at historic quarters</b>					
Making the historic centre works for the elderly people	4	4	4		
Promoting cohesion in a multi-ethnic environment	3	2	5	1	
Urban safety and security	3	1	5	2	
New approaches to public space	4	3	1	4	
Accessibility, universal design and architectural barriers	4	3	4	1	
The housing question in the heritage city	3	5	3		
Managing gentrification. An issue at the heritage mid-sized city?	3	3	4	1	

Sub-themes and topics	Relevance	Background and experience			
	1-5	Inexperienced	Beginner	Experienced performer	Innovator
<b>Governance   Participatory approaches for the heritage city</b>					
Modern heritage site management	4	1	5	2	
Breaking competence silos and policy mixes	3	2	4	2	
Multi-level governance, problem-solving approach...	4	3	2	3	

Participatory approaches and PPP formulas: urban labs, BIDs...	4	3	2	2	1
[Local] Regulations facilitating heritage valorisation	3	3	2	3	
Innovative funding and financial tools	4	4	2	2	
Sustainability and CH-led regen.: links to New Urban Agenda and SDGs	4	3	3	2	

[\*] The number in **relevance** is the average score, being 1 the lowest relevance and 5 the highest one. The numbers in **background & experience** are number of partner cities to each category. Sometimes, a comparatively less interest in a topic may reveal somewhat gap in that subject —e.g. Heraklion’s low interest in economy and employment might show a poor performance in that field.

## A learning itinerary adaptable to unpredictable circumstances

It is about how the plan was evolving from the initial setting to adapt the network’s life to different circumstances, some unpredictable —different waves of the Covid-19 pandemic, one partner’s withdraw in Phase 2, war in Ukraine affecting nearby countries—, others in the form of windows of opportunity. **Flexibility along the way, but keeping the same initial ambition.**

It resulted in an even enhanced learning itinerary, made up of 2 theme warm-ups, 4 thematic workshops, 1 peer-review workshop, 4 one-day study visits [Bologna, Lorca, Malbork and Gdansk], plus the network final event.





#### KAIRÓS international work plan

The original one coloured in grey. The final one coloured in orange

#### **KAIRÓS warm-ups were indeed a new concept.**

The enlargement of the activation stage due to the pandemic was addressed as an opportunity to ignite the kind of discussion that would be undertaken later through the Thematic Workshop series. That was the purpose of the so-called Warm-Ups, under the form of two interactive webinars of three hours each. Both following the same structure of keynote, case study presentation, discussion time and introduction of two specific hot topics, bringing together an outstanding pool of invited experts and practitioners. The hot topics were about tourism, housing, financing and green solutions in historic quarters.

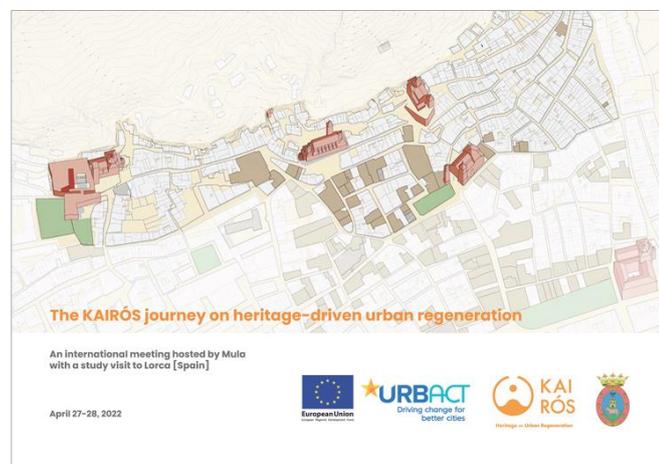
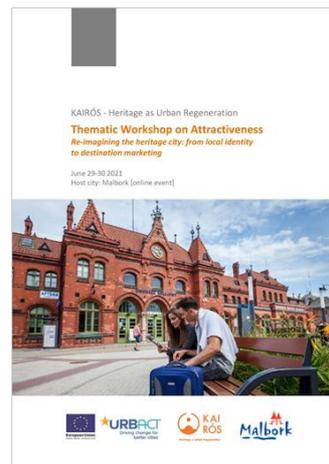
Moreover, the warm-ups arrived just in time to support the IAP Roadmaps. Mathias Ripp's keynotes were consciously focused on how to best approach action planning in urban heritage contexts. He delivered a good number of tips in this regard, from the critical importance of having a good scoping initial stage to how to get success with the stakeholder involvement.

#### **Thematic workshops as the cornerstone.**

The four workshops dedicated to each of the KAIRÓS pillars —Space, Economy, Attractiveness and Social Cohesion— worked as the backbone of the journey. The fifth pillar on Governance was approached as a crosscutting theme, with a continuous presence in almost all learning activities. KAIRÓS thematic workshops were two-day events, usually organized in about 5-6 working sessions,

one of them fully devoted to the host city. Substantial time were devoted to the pre-event, including preparatory meetings with speakers and lead discussants, and occasionally exchanges with registered participants to prepare the most interactive sessions.

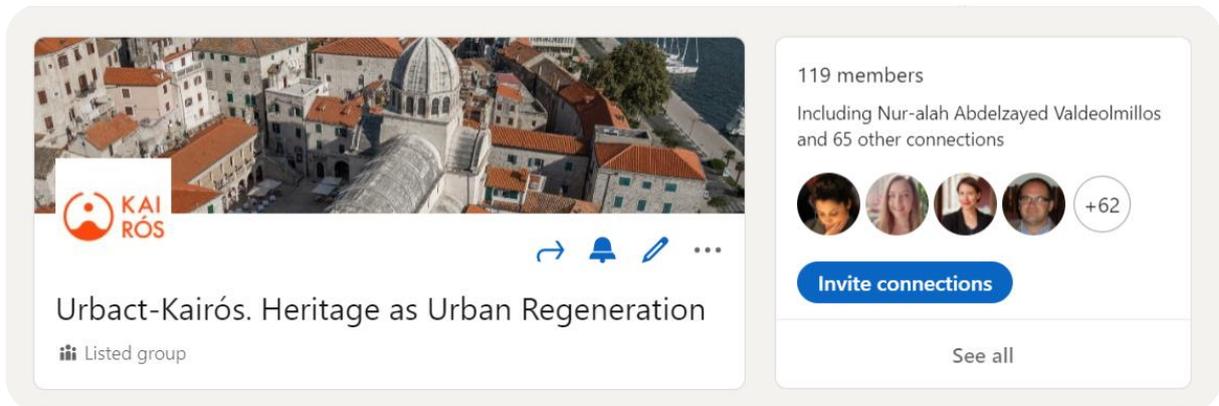
The **KAIRÓS final event** was a time to gather the achievements and refine the final outputs, but also to discuss about the difficulties encountered along the way, the road ahead and, in short, extract the main lessons from the experience. It was a dynamic and lively meeting that combined different types of sessions and activities: keynote, presentations, short films from the partner cities, exhibition [on Mula’s IAP], parallel workshops aimed at IAP peer-review, panel discussion with Mayors, site visit on the second day, and even a remarkable official announcement [the constitution of the Network of Heritage Cities of Murcia].



## Extending the discussion beyond the network

From the very beginning, the KAIRÓS APN was seeking opening the discussion to other cities, networks and organisations, as a way to “enrich by enlarging” the learning experience driven by the KAIRÓS five-pillar model. This extended dialogue was possible thanks to a variety of initiatives:

- Involvement through case study presentations over **20 cities** other than the KAIRÓS partners in our transnational activities [some of them enlisted as World Heritage], namely: Florence, Bamberg, Regensburg, Beemster & Amsterdam, Athens, Bordeaux, Turin, Skopje, Olot, Roskilde, Puuvilla, Amarante, Medina del Campo, Dublin, Porto, Bolzano, Riga, Palermo, Bologna, Castelbuono, Pori and Naas.
- Three out of the four one-day study visits that we organized along the KAIRÓS journey were to non-partner cities. **Bologna** [a benchmark in heritage-driven urban development], **Lorca** [the city brings many of the challenges, current debates, planning figures and even controversial projects that are related to heritage from a city perspective] and **Gdansk** [outstanding civic empowerment initiatives, as well as heritage and memory driven urban projects underway].
- Participation in **major external events**. KAIRÓS was invited to the International conference “Heritage for the Future/Science for Heritage. A European Adventure for Research and Innovation”, March 2022, organized in Paris by the Foundation for Heritage Sciences with the support of the European Commission and in partnership with the French Ministry of Culture and the French National Centre for Scientific Research. KAIRÓS partner Malbork was introducing the Network at the World Urban Forum [WUF11] in Katowice, June 2022.
- We were approached for consultations from **Sites & Cités Remarquables de France** [renowned heritage organization headquartered in Bordeaux], **Organization of World Heritage Cities** [headquartered in Quebec City, to contribute to the preparatory programme towards the OWHC 16<sup>th</sup> World Congress in 2022] and the Partnership on Culture and Cultural Heritage of the **EU Urban Agenda** [contributions to report “Towards an Observatory on Culture/Cultural Heritage and climate change in the urban context”].
- Contribution to the **Erasmus+** project FUTURE [From Urban To hUman Regeneration] aimed at developing a European curriculum focused on training new professionals capable of designing and managing Integrated Urban Regeneration initiatives.
- The **KAIRÓS Group at LinkedIn** —“Urbact-Kairós. Heritage as Urban Regeneration”— to share thoughts, news, experiences and initiatives related to cultural heritage as a driver for urban development and regeneration and open to anyone interested in the topic. Thus, it was not for discussing on internal issues related to the APN. The KAIRÓS Group at LinkedIn was able to attract over one hundred who signed up, half of them outside the KAIRÓS network.



## The KAIRÓS roadmaps to local action planning

Conscious preparation is behind the successful completion of the KAIRÓS journey. Partner cities invested significant energy by the end of 2020 in producing well-detailed local roadmaps, including an ex-ante reflection on their IAP main orientation. This puts the IAP progress on the right track from the beginning.

KAIRÓS IAP Roadmaps followed a common structure, compelling partner cities and their stakeholders to make early decisions on the following:

- **ULG organization and work dynamics**

- Participation

- Membership final adjustments. Degree of flexibility

- Rules for ULG members in order to get real involvement and co-production

- ULG setting: core group / enlarged group. Purpose and membership for each one.

- Third party involvement: who, when, how, for what

- Any other complementary tool on participation and co-production

- Ways for rewarding and keeping ULG member's motivation alive.

- Means of legitimation

- Meeting format/s

- Purpose, frequency and calendar of meetings

- Logistic arrangements: basic guidelines for venue choice, room setting, etc

- Work dynamics inside ULG meetings: standard agenda

- Coordination, facilitation and technical support

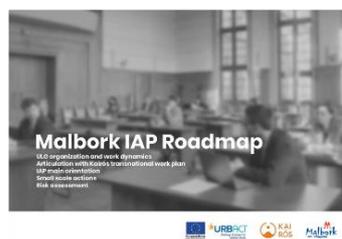
- Coordination, facilitation and reporting and cumulative feedback: who do what

- Work in-between ULG meetings. Specific digital tool to share information and inputs

- Need for external technical support

- Role of elected representatives

- **Articulation with Kairós transnational work plan**
  - Articulation in terms of timing and sub-themes
  - Participation of ULG members in transnational activities, network and programme level
  - Means for capturing and disseminating within the ULG the outcomes from transnational activities
  - Involvement of ULG members in the KAIRÓS communication plan
- **IAP main orientation**
  - Decision on IAP main orientation: target area, problems to tackle
  - If timely, first sketch of possible actions
  - Branding the IAP
  - Calendar for the IAP progress
- **Small scale actions**
  - Decision on type of small-scale action/s to carry out over 2021
  - Description, motivation [in relation to the IAP], stakeholders to involve, timing, budget.
- **Risk assessment**
  - Critical factors for a relevant and smooth local action planning process
  - Risk factors and ways to manage them



## Small-scale actions feeding the process

Pilots and small-scale actions are quite useful to give projects on heritage valorisation and adaptive reuse a more solid base. They can adopt a variety of forms, ranging from tactical urbanism and pop-up interventions to awareness-raising events and campaigns and challenge-based calls and contests. The choice of most KAIRÓS partner cities has been making the most of the SSA concept

to cultivate the social cohesion dimension of the KAIRÓS five-pillar model while deepening the participatory approach beyond the ULG format.

More specifically, those actions took the form of small events aimed at opening a dialogue with specific groups or consciously bringing together different groups into the same conversation to boost more cohesion between them. Three examples below:

■ **Inter-generational dialogue [Sibenik]**

Sibenik has proved that promoting the inter-generational dialogue is not a minor but a primary tool in heritage-driven urban regeneration. It is indeed useful to foster liveability in the historic city —which is often turning into an ageing city due to depopulation— and a vehicle for transferring identity values to the youngest. The Cesena team equipped small public spaces —a corner or “kantun” as it is called in Šibenik— in a way to attract the elderly to socialize and, duly facilitated, tell their stories about the old town [see picture below].

■ **Inter-cultural dialogue [Mula]**

Mula’s drumming tradition was the vehicle to face the ghettoization of the *Barrios Altos*, with a now prevailing low-income immigrant population coming from North Africa. “Multicultural Reverberations” was the name of the action consisting in a number of outdoor workshops for schoolchildren to make drums with recycled materials, followed by small performances. Attendance of the workshops evolved from voluntary, playful and informal in the beginning to become more proficiently established.

■ **User-centred dialogue [Cesena]**

Opening dialogues with specific groups of city users can certainly boost new ideas and solutions. In the context of the heritage-driven urban regeneration of the area surrounding the train station, the Municipality of Cesena promoted two small-scale activities: a kind of educational lab and a flash mob. Both targeted high school and faculty students, as main users of the area, who were encouraged to prospect proposals of their own. Interestingly, it resulted in the strengthening of nature-based types of solutions for the action plan. The flash mob was called #stazioniAMO, like one of the 12 actions of the IAP. It was shaped as a “desire wall”, collecting more than 300 notes in a single morning [see picture below].

In the context of KAIRÓS, small-scale action progress followed the same steps:

- **Ideation.** Based on previous consultation and co-creation with stakeholders.
- **Programming.** According to a common sheet [title, short description, motivation and link to the IAP, date/duration, expected outputs and results, stakeholders to involve].
- **Delivery.** Gathering images and testimonials.
- **Reporting & assessment.** According to a common sheet [impact assessment and learning].



Small-scale actions in Sibenik [left] and Cesena [right]

## Partner cities review each other

The KAIRÓS IAP drafting process was organized according to four milestones: IAP roadmap, by end of 2020; preliminary draft IAP, by end of 2021 [still raw stuff, but informative enough to allow peers and the URBACT lead expert giving an opinion, basically on main orientation and first skeleton of the initiatives]; final draft IAP, April 2022 [full text, including resourcing, implementation framework and risk analysis] and final version [layout and graphic design, ready for circulation]. The first three milestones were the subject of ad-hoc peer-review exercises.

### Online/offline peer-review of the IAP roadmap

A multilateral exchange was organized online in December 2020 aimed at learning from a number of highlights taken from the draft roadmaps. Then, partner cities were encouraged to review three peers with a “critical friend” approach, according to common guidelines delivered by the LE.

### In-workshop/off-workshop peer-review of the preliminary draft IAP

The second peer-review also ran as a two-stage process. First, in a dedicated peer-review workshop held in Cesena [November 2021], partner cities reviewed each other’s IAPs using role plays — #redisent #local politician #journalist #shop owner or investor #funding regional authority #URBACT secretariat [planner, experts]. The role play method is closer to the real world and in particular to the different perspectives to bear in mind when planning in a multi-stakeholder environment. The work in Cesena ended in a World Café-type session where participants split in different tables to discuss about what they had most appreciated from the reviews and how they would take this feedback into consideration when back home. Additionally, after the workshop,

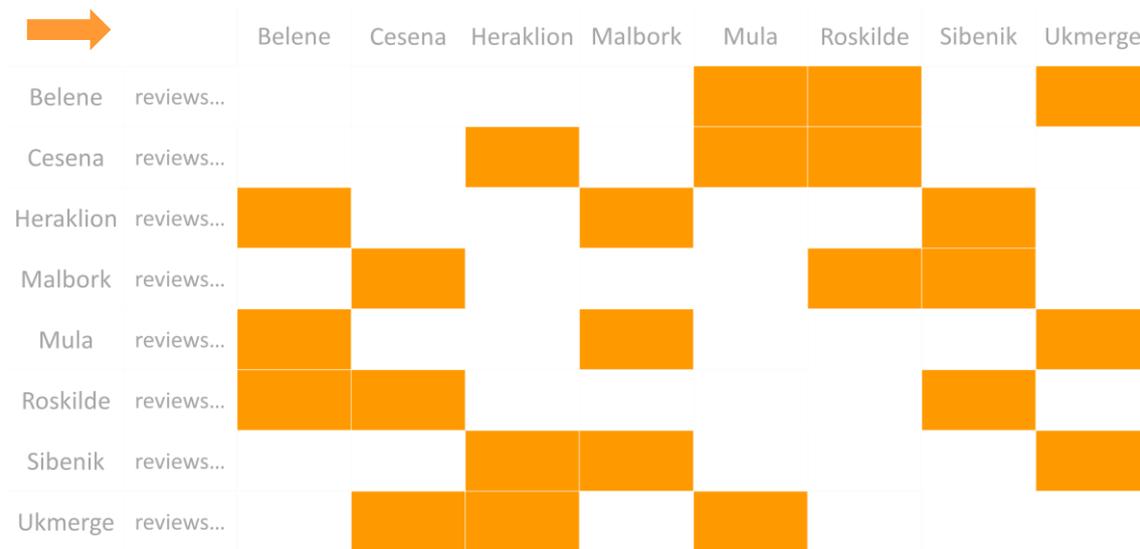
partner cities agreed to make a short written review of three IAPs, according to a “who reviews who” matrix and a short template delivered by the LE. That template was as follows:

- Overall comment  
Having your overall impression about your peer’s IAP and the room for improvement will be very illuminating.
- City context and definition of the initial problem  
Is the intended challenge clearly introduced? Would you miss any relevant information on the local context?
- Vision and focus  
Are the impacts the IAP wants to achieve clear enough?
- The Kairós effect  
Is the 5-pillar model recognizable in any way? What would you advice to make the IAP closer to the KAIRÓS approach? Is there any concept on heritage valorisation or heritage-driven urban regeneration behind the IAP?
- Specific governance improvements  
Urban regeneration is always complex and making the integrated approach work may need from some organisational improvements. What is in the IAP in this respect? What could you advise to your city peer?
- Set of Actions  
It must be the core of the IAP. Is it so in this case? Is the set well structured? Are the actions well described? What about their consistency, impact, affordability, innovativeness? Do you miss any type of action that might be relevant to consider?



IAP peer-review workshop in Cesena

Short written reviews of IAP roadmaps - who reviews who [Nov 2020]



Short written reviews of IAP preliminary drafts - who reviews who [Nov 2021]



**Live peer-review of the final draft IAP**

The KAIRÓS final event [Mula, April 2022] was conceived, at some point, as a last opportunity to get insights from peers to fine tune actions facing the final version of the IAPs. To that aim, all IAPs were “de-constructed” and their actions clustered by three main themes, to be then presented and reviewed in smaller groups. Three KAIRÓS cities were encouraged [duly trained by the LE] to take the lead in igniting, moderating and reporting the discussion with participants. So, they appointed one facilitator and one rapporteur of their own. The idea was to run a dialogue between peers, with no further assistance from experts.

- Track 1. Discussion on actions concerning physical regeneration and housing.  
Conducted by Municipality of Cesena.
- Track 2. Discussion on actions concerning social cohesion  
Conducted by Municipality of Šibenik.
- Track 3. Discussion on actions concerning economy and attractiveness  
Conducted by Municipality of Ukmergė.

## Resulting action plans



### **Mula [Spain]**

#### ***Stop the snowball of dereliction in the historic Barrios Altos***

Mula [16,800 inhabitants, 14,500 in town] has the imperious need to stop and revert the vicious circle of degradation and decline that is affecting the so-called *Upper Quarters*, built over the castle hill with a street layout dating back to the Middle Ages. The *Barrios Altos* are seriously impacted by a shrinking, aged and increasingly multi-ethnic population, since the traditional social fabric has greatly moved to other more accessible parts of the city and is replaced by migrants from North Africa. The massive degradation of the housing stock and abandoned properties have led to social decay and conflict, with the subsequent poor image of the area.

Rehabilitation and regeneration schemes, with a poor integrated approach, have been tried in the past with scarce results. Now, the KAIRÓS five-pillar model has provided direction for an Integrated Action Plan organized in four strands: housing, public space and accessibility, restoring commercial life, rebuilding attractiveness and social cohesion. Actions are of two types: igniting actions [“soft initiatives” to create favourable conditions] and structuring actions, with a more transformation capacity.



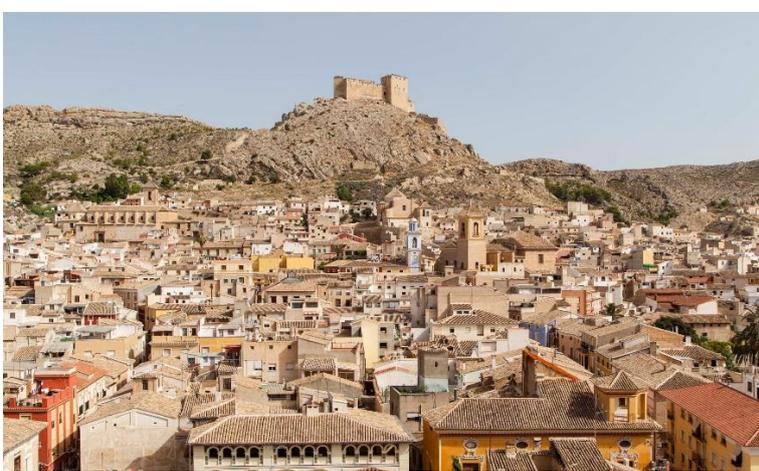
### **Šibenik [Croatia]**

#### ***Get back the lost urban vibrancy of the old town***

Šibenik [46,332 inhabitants, 34,300 in the urban settlement], on the Croatian seashore, has rapidly become a renowned tourism destination. However, a priority of the local government is to achieve a more sustainable urban development for its unique, Venetian-style old town, which is being affected by depopulation, tourism-driven gentrification and lack of urban vitality during the low season. Consequently, the KAIRÓS five-pillar model guided a new look at the old town, more consciously focused on the local population and on the off-season, setting aside for a while its condition of space serving tourism and the visitor economy —a dedicated survey gathered around

300 answers from the neighbourhood. The resulting IAP focused on a set of grassroots and achievable actions to be implemented over a five-year period, covering three work streams:

- Raising awareness of citizens about their urban heritage and the many possibilities associated to an unconventional view of cultural heritage valorisation.
- Making the old town friendlier for the elderly people and promoting the inter-generational dialogue as a booster of liveability.
- Connecting heritage to new digital solutions as way to give wider accessibility to the old town while opening opportunities for entrepreneurship.



Left: Mula. Right: Sibenik old town



### **Cesena [Italy]**

***This is not about historic centres only***

Over the past years, the Municipality of Cesena [97,210 inhabitants] has been developing an impactful strategy on heritage-driven urban regeneration primarily focused on the historic centre. At present, the spotlight is nonetheless on reactivating the industrial legacy of the city as foundation for the redevelopment of the now characterless area surrounding the train station. The legacy is that of the Arrigoni complex, a fruit and vegetable processing factory that reached its peak during the war period. The Arrigoni became popular because many of its workers fought fascism with strikes and sabotage actions, so many were persecuted or killed, including the owner Giorgio Sanguinetti. During the 60's the plant was moved to the periphery, freeing up a large area which was redeveloped 20 years after. Today, a few buildings and one of the three big chimneys of the former factory remain.

Yet the area is home to three high schools and one university faculty, it is undergoing urban and social decay, with abandoned spaces, homeless people, lack of quality public spaces and facilities dedicated to area's main users —e.g. study rooms, internet cafes, etc. However, this urban fragment has the potential to be transformed into a kind of 24/7 multi-functional welcoming place, where even to stay, if working properly with accessibility, safety, attractiveness and innovation. The KAIRÓS five-pillar model has inspired the 12 actions of the IAP called The City Gate, as the area is the main gateway to the city, very close to the historic centre, the new residential area of Quartiere Novello and the new campus of the University of Bologna in Cesena.



Target area of Cesena's IAP. Former Arrigoni factory complex next to the railway station



## Malbork [Poland]

### *Strengthening a city perspective to heritage*

Everyone in Poland and many in Europe know Malbork [40,000 inhabitants] as home to the impressive Teutonic Castle, which is UNESCO World Heritage and one of the most visited sites in the country. However, the City feels the impact on the local economy of the massive inflow of people, who only visit the castle and then leave the city, should be higher. On the other hand, Malbork is close to Gdansk conurbation, which is a magnet for the young population of the Pomerania region. In this context, the Local Government has addressed the IAP to re-think cultural heritage from a wider city perspective, beyond its main monumental artefact and the tourism framework. The aim was to realize the untapped potential of heritage as a driver for the city development. As a result, three ambits for discussion/action were opened.

First is urban space, which is now fractured by two national roads and the railway line crossing the city. Giving an instrumental role to concepts like cultural urban landscape or urban heritage could contribute to “stitching the city” and overcoming the different segregated spatial dynamics, by promoting new circulations for both visitors and locals. Circulations inside the city —where existing and future projects on heritage valorisation and adaptive reuse might work as landmarks— and those of the city to the Nogat riverbank and the countryside —by linking heritage and nature.

Second transformational ambit is addressing heritage valorisation as a source for innovation and business opportunities, enhancing Malbork’s value proposition as a local economy and including now heritage-oriented investment & talent attraction. Third area for action is promoting a more integrated approach to branding & marketing Malbork, in a way that the castle does not overshadow other real and potential city assets. The KAIRÓS IAP has provided Malbork a tool to work with heritage differently.



## **Heraklion [Greece]**

### ***Revitalizing the historic quarter of Aghia Triada***

Inside Heraklion’s Venetian walls, Aghia Triada [Holy Trinity] retains much of its peculiar urban character made up of a labyrinth of narrow streets and small alleys, courtyards with characteristic masonry walls marking on a human scale the separation between public and private space, and small taverns and traditional coffee shops [*kafeneia*]. However, despite its central location, next door to Heraklion’s administrative and touristic core, the district is a degraded area, seriously affected by lots of abandoned properties, with a shrinking population and low-income households.

There have been small-scale initiatives and some major urban interventions in the past, but the KAIRÓS five-pillar model has provided the lens to envision the district regeneration from a truly integrated perspective for the first time. Declared goals are now re-building the neighbourhood life while regenerating the unique built environment. This vision drives the resulting IAP, with actions in four work streams:

- Pedestrianisation, by drastically reducing the annoyance caused by vehicles, as well as enhancing the public space.
- Residential upgrade. Including removal of hazardous ready to collapse buildings and a social housing programme.
- Retailing, culture and leisure as levers for a lively neighbourhood. From spaces for low-cost ateliers and small retailers to reusing a central-located abandoned property as a new creative hub.
- Social welfare and civic empowerment, to reduce episodes of social conflict and restore confidence between the neighbourhood and the Municipality.



Left: inside Malbork's castle. Right: Aghia Triada district, Heraklion



## **Ukmergė [Lithuania]**

### ***Empowering civic society for old town's revitalisation***

Ukmergė's old town is closely linked to the Jewish urban culture and heritage, to such a point that after the Holocaust, which left about 10,000 members of the local Jewish community massacred in 1941, the old town has not been brought back to normal life since then. The stagnation of Ukmergė's old town has made this place unattractive to people's imaginary, and surprisingly this central area was not an option for many to live in. A somewhat rigid regulation on heritage preservation seems to work as an additional hindrance.

So, the big challenge was to organize and develop a comprehensive strategy for the integrated urban regeneration of the area, providing a framework to the number of physical rehabilitation projects promoted by the Municipality and raising the confidence and interest of dwellers, investors, shop owners and entrepreneurs alike. Moreover, it was absolutely necessary to build up a participatory approach, almost from the scratch. On the one hand, the Municipality felt the need to have a credible civic counterpart to discuss and agree with. On the other hand, the local community needed to be re-energized somehow.

Consequently, the resulting IAP covers four main areas: civic empowerment, rising awareness of the value of urban heritage and heritage valorisation [targeting public staff as well], bolder initiatives to promote street life and vibrancy in the old town, and building up a more compelling narrative of the city and the old town, leading to a sound branding strategy targeting visitors, locals and investors.



## **Belene [Bulgaria]**

### ***Waterfront redevelopment by linking natural & cultural heritage landmarks***

Belene is a shrinking small town of 7,500 inhabitants located on the border with Romania. Its pathway into economic and urban development has been heavily conditioned by the construction plans of a nuclear power plant, just 3 Km from the city, which have been postponed repeatedly over the past three decades. In this context, the city needs to shape an agenda of her own, and heritage would have much to say in this regard. Within a short distance, Belene is home to a unique combination of natural, cultural and dissonant heritage —the spectacular Persina Nature Park, including Belene Danube archipelago of 19 islands, which is a world-class landmark for fishing and ornithology, the Ancient Roman castle of Dimum, unique in its kind, and the memorial project of the largest concentration camp of the communist era in Bulgaria. Those three landmarks deserve better valorisation and the activation of synergies between them.

This vision could crystallize in the integrated redevelopment of the Danube river waterfront, which is the main flagship proposal of the KAIRÓS Integrated Action Plan. This area will include Persina Nature Park’s visitor centre, a fishing wharf, the restored Roman castle of Dimum, an outdoor stage for the Danube River Festival and the future museum of the Belene. The strip would be equipped with pedestrian and bicycle paths, benches and playgrounds. The Danube Park project might work as new hotspot for both locals and visitors, bringing the gravity centre of the city much closer to the river and its most prominent heritage assets. A project of this kind will create new job opportunities and counterbalance today’s city narrative, which is somehow kidnapped by the nuclear power plant megaproject.



Left: Ukerge old town. Right: Belene on the Danube riverbanks

## Placing the IAP within the existing planning framework

### Reconciling hard and soft planning

Some planning practices are emerging in the urban regeneration field, other than mandatory land use planning and conventional master planning. In a way, they are reconciling “hard” planning and “soft” planning, and some KAIRÓS cities gained momentum to experiment, for the first time, with new [volunteer] forms of action planning in the regeneration field, by means of the URBACT figure of IAP.

For instance, the Municipality of Cesena skillfully caught the point on how the action plan driven by the URBACT method complements and enhances the existing local planning framework with regard to urban regeneration. So, the IAP works as a type of soft planning [which is not synonym of weak planning] complementing and supporting the hard planning figures underway —e.g. general urban plan, mobility plan— and the main projects with a tractor or physical transformation capacity. Moreover, thanks to the URBACT method, the KAIRÓS IAP is making those ongoing projects more visible and understandable for all local stakeholders, and it is raising the sense of place in the target area.

### The IAP as a fundraising tool

Mula’s IAP is somewhat different, in the sense that it has the capacity to promote physical interventions and structural changes by itself, duly articulated with other planning figures in force. Indeed, the own IAP is being used by Mula to attract funds for the regeneration of the *Barrios Altos* on a project-based approach.

In the same vein, the Municipality of Heraklion has secured funds from Crete’s Operational Programme 2021-2027 for the regeneration of the KAIRÓS target area [Aghia Triada district]. The IAP has played an important role in this achievement, since the own OP’s Management Authority was appointed as one of the most prominent members of the Heraklion ULG.

“ The integrated action plan of the historic core of Šibenik has been developed in a way that is realistic and achievable in the short term. We believe that this set of measures will serve our efforts to revive the old city centre.

Željko Burić, Mayor of Šibenik



#### **IAP's new delivery format**

Mula's Integrated Action Plan was converted in an exhibition made up of 10 panels as a way to reach the local population more easily

## **Mayors' involvement**

There is often a sort of mismatch between politician's perception about the role of heritage and how the heritage field has evolved over the past years in connection to urban development. So, the question was, "how to approach them and inspire them?" One of the assumptions of the KAIRÓS APN was the need to engage local elected representatives in order to expand cultural heritage as a driver for sustainable urban development.

**“ I think KAIRÓS means the propitious moment and for us it was indeed the perfect time. A time of creative meetings, brainstorming, consultations with citizens and setting new development goals for the city.**

**Marek Charzewski, Mayor of Malbork**

### The KAIRÓS interview series.

We tried several ways, like the KAIRÓS interview series, where all Mayors were kindly encouraged by the network lead expert to express their visions on how their urban heritage and historic quarters can play a broader role in their cities. In fact, most Mayors were involved in the work with the ULG personally, and it is remarkable that none of the KAIRÓS partner cities reported lack of political support.

### The Political Momentum.

This was the name of the round table with Mayors that was organized in the KAIRÓS final event. The session was ignited and moderated by European Parliament member Marcos Ros. The same event saw the official launch of the **Network of Heritage Cities of Murcia**. There are currently eight cities in the region of Murcia declared “Conjunto Histórico” [protection figure regulated by the Spanish Ministry of Culture]: Aledo, Caravaca de la Cruz, Cartagena, Cehegín, Jumilla, Lorca, Mula and Murcia. Following the initiative of the Town Council of Mula, these cities agreed to establish the Network of Heritage Cities of Murcia [*Red de Ciudades Conjunto Histórico de la Región de Murcia*] in order to promote joint initiatives and projects. It has certainly been an outstanding outcome of KAIRÓS, in the Lead Partner’s region.



The Political Momentum. Round Table with Mayors

## A refined integrated approach for urban heritage

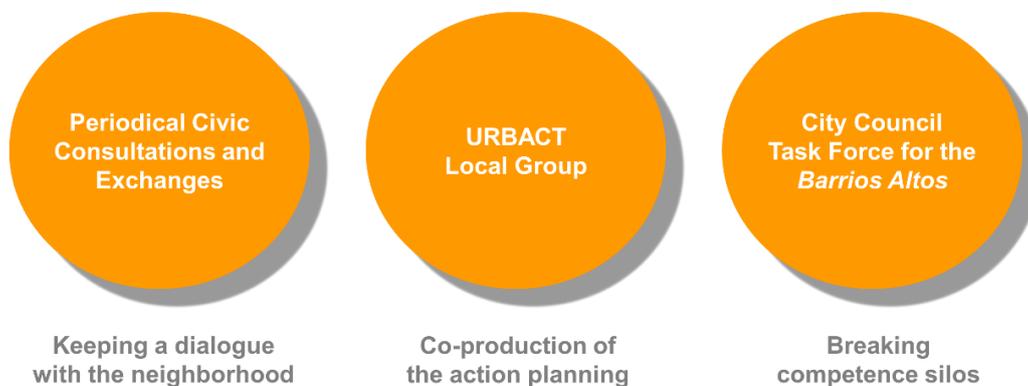
The KAIRÓS journey has accumulated a variety of lessons that can be helpful to any city wanting to maximize the role of cultural heritage. In particular, now we understand better how the integrated approach should work in heritage-led urban development and regeneration to make an impact. It entails a triple endeavour:

- The policy-mix that is needed leads to organisational adjustments locally.**

The five-pillar model is indeed a policy mix, but other combinations may be considered likewise, if appropriate. What is important to assume is that, most likely, to make this model work, minor or major organizational adjustments will be needed in the local government to break the usual silos of competences.

KAIRÓS partners have reacted to this organisational challenge differently. It is worth mentioning Mula City Council's initiative to promote an inter-department task force for the regeneration of the *Barrios Altos*. First steps were to overcome the initial reluctance of some members of this working group.

A reinforced participatory approach for Mula (ES)



- Urban heritage management as a continuous multi-stakeholder process.**

Interestingly, when introducing Regensburg Old Town to the KAIRÓS network, Monika Göttler said “we are 16,000 residents and 186 stakeholders”. And it was shocking listening to her saying that Regensburg’ site management plan is basically a working group. That’s a main lesson.

The five-pillar model has certainly worked to source stakeholders from a new standpoint, since the heritage field is still biased to preservation. However, running a continuous multi-

stakeholder process requires direction and [relational] leadership, good facilitation techniques and some incentives. It is well known that cities working with the URBACT method often report difficulties to keep ULG members engaged and motivated during the whole APN cycle. KAIRÓS has not been an exception.

■ **Multi-level governance in the sense of better funding orchestration.**

Since there is no urban regeneration or area development without significant investment. Due to local government's poor financial capacity, which is a serious obstacle for sound strategies on heritage-driven urban regeneration, cities —notably small and medium-sized cities— should address multi-level governance in terms of fundraising. In particular, targeting national and regional funding sources related to housing, urban regeneration, cultural heritage, climate change and energy transition.

In this respect, Cesena has already secured 10 million Euros from Italy's Recovery and Resilience Plan [funded by the NextGenerationEU facility] to build up a new bus terminal and refurbish the former site as a new public square in the KAIRÓS target area. The Municipality has also got regional funds to retrofit part of the former Arrigoni factory building as venue for the CesenaLab incubator and the regional employment services.

**“ Fundraising is a key aspect in urban regeneration, which is an issue in Spain where the financial capacity of local governments is weak, in particular that of small and medium-sized towns. In this regard, the capability of local governments to involve and create synergies with the regional and national administrations and other public and private institutions makes a difference. I am personally devoting a special effort on this matter.**

**Juan J. Moreno, Mayor of Mula**

# GOVERNANCE

MULTILAYER  
PPP

MULTILAYER  
PPP

## SPACE

RE-USE  
WORKPLACE

SPAZI ABBANDONATI  
STREET ART  
WORKPLACE (GREEN)

## ECONOMY

LOCAL CREATIVE  
ECOSYSTEMS

ECOSYSTEMS  
CULTURAL HERITAGE ATTR.

## ATTRACTIVENESS

STORYTELLING  
AGENDA

STORYTELLING  
AGENDA

TOURISM

## SOCIAL COHESION

NEW APP.  
SICUREZZA

COHESION / MULTICULTA  
NEW APP. PUBLIC  
ACCESSIBILITY



The KAIRÓS journey | IAP final report