

URBACT



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Interreg

GreenPlace



INSPIRING PRACTICES
on
CULTURAL HERITAGE AS A RESOURCE

June 2024

INTRODUCTION

The GreenPlace network

GreenPlace is an URBACT network consisting of ten partners who aim at developing a set of activities for "recycling" unused urban areas, using social participation tools. The project takes into account not only the regional specificities and conditions of each of the partners but also introduces greenery as a key factor in limiting climate change in urban areas. It is running from July 2023 to December 2025.

It is led by the City of Wroclaw (Poland) and is composed of 9 project partners:

- Boulogne-sur-mer Développement Côte d'Opale - France
- Bucharest Metropolitan Area Intercommunity Development Association - Romania
- Cehegín - Spain
- Limerick - Ireland
- Löbau - Germany
- Nitra - Slovakia
- Onda - Spain
- Quarto d'Altino - Italy
- Vila Nova de Poiares - Portugal

More information and contacts : <https://urbact.eu/networks/greenplace>.

Overview of the Inspiring practices on Community Engagement

The practices presented here were exchanged during the Core Network Meeting of the GreenPlace Network which took place on 13 and 14 March in Cehegin, Spain.

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COMBINING ART AND NATURE THROUGH AN EXHIBITION IN A PARK: CIRCULAR ART

Identity

- Cehegín, Spain
- 14,710 inhabitants , 292.7 km²
- More details [here](#)



Initial challenge

The Coto de las Maravillas was opened in the late 1990s as a new ecological park for the residents of Cehegín. The site is little known, and except for a few events taking place there every year, there is no communication nor signposting prompting locals (or tourists) to make use of this unique place.

Proposed solution

In 2023 it was decided to give a new use to the pine forest in the Coto de las Maravillas with the aim to attract the population of Cehegín to enjoy art in the natural environment by organizing a Biennial of Art and Nature . In this way it was possible to bring activity to the outskirts of the town and attract the population to the countryside. The curator of this exhibition, in charge of selecting the works, was Nicolas de Maya, one of Cehegín's most famous artists and was supervised by the City Council. The same year, the Municipality of Cehegín launched a call for artistic projects to embellish the Coto de las Maravillas.

50 projects were submitted by local and international artists. The exposed pieces of art are made out of recycled material and are linked to the natural environment of the ecological park, thereby answering the need to illustrate nature, as well as to find a place for artistic exhibitions. Some examples of the works are: a work made with paper representing a tree whose aim is to return to the dust from which it came; a door to nature made with the trunks of a nearby tree; a circular presentation formed by brooms representing a disease of the pine trees in the area. 10 of them will be showcased every two years, starting in 2023, adding to one another, with the hope to reach 100 in 10 years. The second edition of the festival will take place in 2025.

The project is supported by private sponsors. A company is now in charge of managing the visits to the exhibition.

Changes it brought

- The exhibition has made the place more visited by the local inhabitants.
- Although it is not yet well known outside Cehegín, it represents an opportunity to become known internationally thanks to future editions.
- The artistic potential of the natural works has made visitors aware of the circularity of the materials. .

Transfer potential

- This is difficult to transfer depending on existing networks of artists
- A call for project could be used for other purposes beyond art such as solidarity events, gastronomic events, etc.

Main takeaways

- The support of the City Council is needed to publicise the event.
- A sufficient network of artists is needed to generate attraction and willingness to exhibit..



UNUSED PLACES TRANSFORMED INTO ARTISTS' AND NGOS' OPPORTUNITIES

Identity

- Cehegín, Spain
- 14,710 inhabitants , 292.7 km²
- More details [here](#)

Initial challenge

There is no economic or social life in the city center because the houses are uninhabited.

The historic center of Cehegín has been losing population for 50 years.

The houses are abandoned, collapsing and nobody fixes them.



Proposed solution

As part of a project called "Discover your interior" to revitalise the city centre, Cehegín Town Hall has been granting access to empty buildings to local projects since 2022.

The City Council contacts the owners of these empty locals in poor condition to offer to take charge of their rehabilitation at no cost to them. In return, the City Council gives these spaces to local associations and artists for a small rent. There are currently 7 premises available offering a variety of artistic, educational and promotional activities. Specifically, there is an art gallery for Cehegín artists, which will house works by national artists; a place for the interpretation of clay crafts; a place to sell local honey; two spaces for the diffusion and exhibition of local commerce; a space for an locals NGO; a place for the elaboration of figures for local festivities. The rent lasts 4 years, when NGOs and artist can be asked to leave if they cannot compete with a lease proposed by an external party.

Changes it brought

With this initiative of the City Council, the historic centre is busier, although it is still too early to say whether the population has returned to the city. Buildings have been improved by envelope improvements and have increased their structural safety. Artists and associations are happy with these spaces for lower rent than other spaces in the municipality.

Transfer potential

The type of agreement made can be transferred to other cities to learn about the legal terms.

This idea can be transferred as a form of political goodwill.

Main takeaways

Publicly funded programmes can support both landlords and tenants to support traditional activities in the municipality.



EXPOSING THE CITY DEFENCES

Identity

- Limerick , Ireland
- 102, 287 inhabitants, 61.3sqkm
- sarah.mccutcheon@limerick.ie



Initial challenge

Limerick is a medieval walled city in two parts, Englishtown (circuit 1650m, 14ha) to the north and to the south of the Abbey River, the suburb or base town now known as Irishtown (circuit 1375m, 13ha). In 1760 Limerick was declared an open city and since then the walls have been dismantled and absorbed into subsequent development. One of the best remaining sections, in Irishtown, had become overgrown. The inner ramparts are not easily accessible to the public. Development had taken place in direct proximity to the walls and there is a certain amount of anti-social behaviour taking place in these areas as well, keeping locals and tourists away from the heritage site.

Proposed solution

It is an objective of the Local Authority to protect town defences and plot layout, to carry out the objectives of the conservation and management plan for Limerick City and support the work of the Irish Walled Town Network. The Network was founded in 2005 by the Heritage Council to unite and co-ordinate the efforts of local authorities in the management and conservation of walled towns in the 32 counties. Since 2020, the network has founded 4 capital schemes to clean and consolidate this section of wall. To further enhance the use and appreciation of the city defences several strategies have been devised:

- To look at permeability in the wider area and plan a redesign of the public realm to allow for greater footfall and free flow of tourists.
- To actively engage with the local communities on the importance of the wall and on the details of the improvement works taking place throughout the stages. Leaflet drops are done to local houses and tours are organised during National Heritage Week in August.
- To make the clay embankment more accessible to the public, by more regular maintenance & by removing the locked gate to the steps to the embankment and removing plant overgrowth hindering access.

Residents association also work in hand with the Local Authority to improve the area with litter picks and planting.

Changes it brought

- An opportunity to promote the old city defences and to integrate the city walls into the daily lives of citizens, promoting local identity and pride.
- An increase in walking routes for locals , visitors and tourists.
- The increased footfall and the improvement in the overall appearance of the area has mitigated against the anti-social activity in the area. We can now appreciate the view, the ambience, the history & heritage of the area.

Transfer potential

It is transferable as a way for cities to revisualise and reconnect lost heritage and to rejoin it to its surviving elements which will strengthen their presence.

Main takeaways

- Heritage Presentation is a way for cities to revisualise and reconnect lost heritage and to rejoin it to its surviving elements which will strengthen their presence.
- Interpretation is needed where elements are missing.



MAKING THE PAST VISIBLE WITH INTEGRATED INFORMATION BOARDS

Identity

- Löbau, Germany
- 14,000 inhabitants, 78.9 km²
- www.fabrik-reanimiert.de
- info@fabrik-reanimiert.de or
- info@stiftung-hausschminke.eu



Initial challenge

For pretty much any building or place it is very hard for people to imagine things that are demolished, gone or just a story from the past. Therefore, the Stiftung Haus Schminke has been working on making the things that are gone and hard to explain or hard to imagine - visible. It is important to give the public a chance to understand the meaning and the importance of a place. At the same time, it is a challenge to offer interesting knowledge with a low threshold for a broad audience.

Proposed solution

An easy way to show what “things used to look like” are old photos or drawings of a place. We highly recommend “before and after” pictures from the same perspective as it makes it very easy to find changes and make transformation visible. For example, pictures were used in the revitalisation of the new park for the “Landesgartenschau” (the central park, created on the ground of a former Sugar Factory) in Löbau. As another example, in the garden of the Haus Schminke (the former residence of the director of the neighbouring Noodle factory) we worked with photo spots and QR-codes that made it possible to compare a historical photo on your phone with the same perspective today. These QR-codes were part of the special exhibition at the Haus Schminke (see picture above). For these signs we only needed to upload pictures on our webpage, generate QR-codes and have them printed on alu-dibond-plates.

Changes it brought

Understanding the past of a place or building, even after it is gone, worked very well with the old photos from the same perspectives. At the same time, people started to ask more questions e.g.. about the original garden design and wanted to dig deeper into its past. To have people understand a place or building better will help future discussions and decisions.

Transfer potential

Information boards work anywhere and can be designed for a lot of different target groups. Today it is very easy to connect a physical information board to more information and content (e.g. video, audio etc.) via QR-Codes. With them you can also make texts audible for “non-readers” or blind people. As it is just a link to a website, you can use pretty much anything as content and design.

Main takeaways

Both the design and the content need to be suitable for the target group. If the target group is very broad (“everybody”) things should be low-threshold and additional info can be accessed via QR-codes. For example, nobody wants to read a lengthy text about everything, therefore: Less text, more pictures, videos etc.



MAKING REFERENCES TO THE HERITAGE WITH VISUAL ARTEFACTS

Identity

- Löbau, Germany
- 14,000 inhabitants, 78.9 km²
- www.messepark-loebau.de/unternehmen/geländeübersicht/
- info@fabrik-reanimiert.de or
- info@stiftung-hausschminke.eu



Initial challenge

When buildings or places are being demolished or transformed, it is difficult for the public to value and keep the heritage of what was previously on the site. Information boards are only one way of finding links to the past that cannot be seen anymore. If something new is designed on the site it can be worthwhile to integrate some of its history by using shapes/formations/uses/materials in the new design. This approach can help to explain the former use of the place with a very low threshold.

Proposed solution

For the “Landesgartenschau” (“Saxon Garden festival”) a big brownfield was turned into a public park. As part of the park, new playgrounds were planned to keep the link to the past and remind people of the former sugar factory that was demolished in the very same location. The city of Löbau announced a European competition for the task, the landscape architects later won the German landscape architect award for their work. Parts of the playgrounds are sugar-cane and sugar-cube shapes, designed by the landscape architects, with explanatory boards that help to remind people of the former use as a sugar factory. The budget for the park was cofinanced by the Saxon Ministry for environment and agriculture with 50% (about 4.5 Mio Euro).

Changes it brought

The example of the playgrounds shows a playful approach to explain the former use of the site. The playgrounds are all equipped with information boards that explain the idea. Additionally, new designs for playground equipment with special shapes etc. were created instead of generic playground designs or modules.

Transfer potential

The general idea works anywhere with anything, but it needs creative designers to find the right approach. To find those designers and ideas there many different approaches. For example, a competition for ideas can help to find the right team. It is also worthwhile to find out what kids want on a playground in the first place. Cooperations with schools or daycare centres can help strengthen both participation and acceptance of the results.

Main takeaways

- Extra explanation is needed: e.g. with information boards.
- The costs for the design process and production will be higher compared to generic designs or modules.



CREATING A TOPOGRAPHY OF SIMILAR BUILDINGS

Identity

- Löbau, Germany
- 14,000 inhabitants, 78.9 km²
- www.topomomo.eu
- info@topomomo.eu or
- info@fabrik-reanimiert.de or
- info@stiftung-hausschminke.eu



Initial challenge

The Haus Schminke, former residence of the director of the nearby Noodle factory is a clear example of 1930s modernism by architect Hans Scharoun. We knew that more buildings from the same time as the Haus Schminke existed in the region but there was no research on most of the places neither was there any sort of topography to show the architectural richness of the region. We wanted to let locals understand the effects of modernism and the economically very successful past in the region to build up the “self-esteem” and a positive perspective on the region.

Proposed solution

For a better understanding of the cultural heritage, the Stiftung Haus Schminke started a EU-funded (Interreg A) project (TOPOMOMO) to connect those buildings and explain the cultural heritage also to “non-architects”. We published an easy and fun to read publication and [website](http://www.topomomo.eu), easy to understand backgrounds and presented all those rather unknown buildings to a broader audience.

Changes it brought

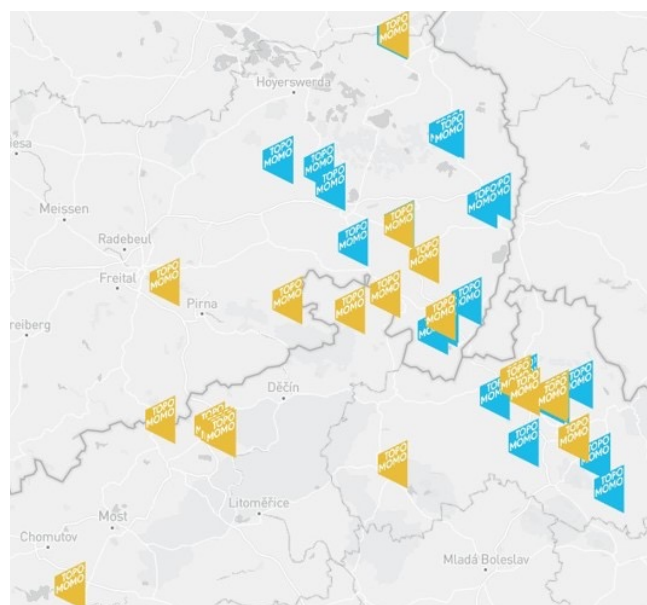
The project has created more attention for buildings, museums, exhibitions and people or NGOs that take care of those places. Because it was a cooperation project with the Technical University of Liberec in Northern Bohemia, it brought a feeling of a shared cultural heritage across the border with Czechia to the public. The aim of the project was to raise awareness and establish an understanding for a shared cultural heritage, to support people and initiatives that take care of these buildings and connect them with one another to exchange their individual expertise. With the “TOPOMOMO Confestival” an event was created for all network partners to meet in person and get to know each other, several experts and the network.

Transfer potential

The architectural heritage of modernism in rural areas is quite special in this region, but if adjusted in topic it is always a good thing to look for similar places and bring them together in some way to show the « big picture ».

Main takeaways

- We need a network for the people who take care of those buildings
- we need to support the members of the network.



HALLOWEEN IN THE MILITARY BARRACKS

Identity

- Nitra, Slovakia,
- 100.48 km² , 77 000 inhabitants
- [Official page](#)
- [Details](#)
- [TV documentary](#)



Initial challenge

In the city of Nitra there is a large brownfield - an abandoned area of former military barracks, Martin's Hills. This area has always been closed in the past, so most of the residents have never been there. However, there are many interesting historical buildings and lots of greenery. The city of Nitra also has very weak tourism and in late autumn there is also a lack of attractive cultural events for the residents.

Proposed solution

In the grounds of the former Nitrian barracks, soldiers, local ghosts came to life and various local historical stories were told. The event was organized by the Nitra Tourist Board and the Military History Club in October 2018. Two activities were organised: a guided tour for pedestrians and a ride on the touristic train.

Changes it brought

The Halloween event aroused great interest among the residents, over 1,000 people participated, mostly dressed up, either on foot or by tourist train. This increased the interest of residents and tourists in the history of the barracks area. Unfortunately, the action is no longer continued.

Transfer potential

It is an activity that is easily applicable in any city. The financial costs of the event are derived from the profit from paid entrance fees for visitors.

Main takeaways

Use the atmosphere of an abandoned place as an attraction and backdrop for various events with a scary theme, for example Halloween for children and adults.

The activity is very suitable if the place is attractive for its interesting mysterious atmosphere. The priority is always the safety of the visitor. Therefore, the place must be safe and visited only with a guide.



CREATIVE CENTRE FOR HERITAGE, CREATIVITY AND SUSTAINABILITY

Identity

- Nitra, Slovakia
- 100.48 km² , 77 000 inhabitants
- [Official page](#)
- zivanovic@msunitra.sk



Initial challenge

In the city of Nitra, there is an extensive brownfield - an abandoned area of former military barracks that does not have a clear vision.

As the owner of several buildings in the area of the former barracks, the city was looking for a new function for the buildings. Due to the fact that the city received funds to build a creative industry in the city, several buildings were designated for restoration for this purpose.

Proposed solution

The municipality found a new feature for the buildings in the abandoned area. The result is a complete reconstruction of long-term dilapidated buildings in the former area of military barracks, which are owned by the city. The Nitra Creative Center project, to which this complete reconstruction of the KCN buildings belongs, is co-financed by the European Union from the European Regional Development Fund within the Operational Program Integrated Regional Operational Program and by the city of Nitra.

The renovation works remind the local heritage (e.g. making the old bricks visible), together by following the most recent green standards (in terms of isolation, energy, etc.).

Changes it brought

The result of the construction works and technological equipment will be an area full of creativity, culture and a pleasant atmosphere - craft workshops, music studio, a multifunctional hall, a creative shop, a reading room, a modern coworking space and a pocket park. 4 buildings, almost 3000 m², have been renovated.

It is the first the first hub for creativity in the city.

Transfer potential

It is a complex process that requires both process management and financing.

Main takeaways

The practice works, especially if you have external sources of financing, not only for the reconstruction of the building and its equipment, but also for the subsequent operation.



COMBINING ART AND ENVIRONMENT

Identity

- Nitra, Slovakia
- 100.48 km² , 77 000 inhabitants
- [IN-HABIT](#)
- More details [here](#)



Initial challenge

With the arrival of large employers, in Nitra was an increase in foreign immigration. Foreign investments brought economic growth to the city, but also important challenges related to the health and well-being of the residents. There is no vision of health and well-being in the city.

Proposed solution

The activities were created as part of the municipality's partnership in the IN-HABIT project, an EU Horizon 2020 project, which aims to identify visionary and integrated solutions to support inclusive health and well-being in small and medium-sized cities. They involved inhabitants in co-creating solutions for improving their well-being through a participatory approach and artists residences. They explored how the arts and the environment can contribute to promoting health and well-being, with a focus on gender, diversity, equality and inclusion. One such activity was the first participative art residency focused on a location, Hidepark, a grassroots led project on a former landfill: 24 took part in the co-design of the first large landart object that will be deployed in the pilot area.

Changes it brought

The above-mentioned landart of HidePart was first introduced to the public during the "Climate unites us" event co-organized by the local youth initiative Be The Change as part of the European Year of Youth events with 300 participants. Working progress was recorded by lens of filmmaker and photographer Peter Bednár, so we will soon introduce short movie about story of this site specific art. Project will continue to support the creation of site-specific natural artworks. The result is the collaboration of the artistic community with the residents on the creation of the environment and city planning.

Transfer potential

The activity is suitable for any city, requires special skills to organize artistic residencies and ideally also external funding of grant schemes for culture and the environment.

Main takeaways

The activity is largely based on volunteerism and civic initiative, or cooperation, e.g. with the university. It works if you have political support and if there is funding from grants.



RENOVATING KEEPING THE ANCIENT VISIBLE

Identity

- Onda (Spain)
- 24859 inhabitants;
- 108.42 km²
- More information [here](#)
- proyectoseuropeos@onda.es



Initial challenge

Onda is a municipality with a strong ceramic tradition, especially since the 19th century. Evidence of this can be seen in the numerous factories that have been and are still located in the town. One of these factories, called "La Campaneta" (declared an Asset of Local Importance), is a municipal building that was in a state of serious disrepair and had no specific use. In addition, this building is located at an intermediate point between three scattered urban centres (the neighbourhoods of Tossalet, Montebianco and Rajolar).

Proposed solution

The City Council decided to begin the restoration of the building, transforming it into a civic, social and cultural revitalisation space, offering various services to the public and serving as a meeting point for all the inhabitants of Onda, especially those of the neighbourhoods. In order to achieve this, the façade and structure of the building was consolidated, the roof was renovated, and the entire interior was adapted through a complete renovation of the building. This action was carried out as part of Onda's Sustainable and Integrated Urban Development Strategy and co-financed by the European Regional Development Funds.

Changes it brought

Thanks to this project, the municipality now has a new space at the service of its citizens. It also offers significant regeneration potential, creating a cultural and recreational landmark to address the shortcomings and needs of the surrounding neighbourhoods.

Transfer potential

The idea of transforming buildings that are part of the city's heritage, while preserving their essence, into centres that serve citizens is not difficult to transfer. However, funding and resources are needed to carry out comprehensive building refurbishment.

Main takeaways

The importance of having sufficient resources and motivation to carry out a project. The rehabilitation of this building has not been easy due to the weather conditions and the state of disrepair of the building, but the City Council has always chosen to move forward with the project.



EXCAVATING AND PLAYING WITH VISUALS

Identity

- Onda (Spain)
- 24859 inhabitants; 108.42 km²
- More information [here](#)
- proyectoseuropeos@onda.es



Initial challenge

In the historic centre of Onda is the Plaza de la Synagogue, axis of the Jewish quarter during medieval Onda. Despite the fact that it contains archaeological remains of great heritage value, this square has always been completely unnoticed. With the aim of revitalising and beautifying the historic centre, as well as enhancing its history, it was necessary to highlight this square and its archaeological remains.

Proposed solution

The City Council decided to carry out a conservative restoration, from an inclusive perspective, consolidating what was there before and making it readable (wood and steel were combined with original Andalusian and Gothic materials). Specifically, a wooden platform has been created on one part of the square, which can be walked on, and the lower part accessed via steps or a ramp. A tribune has also been built, and vegetation, street furniture and new lighting have been installed.

It is important to highlight, on the one hand, the fact that in the renovation, the architects have played with visual aspects, for example connecting the ancient staircase to a new one, making it both beautiful and useful. The project has also met the functional needs of the square's users (road and pedestrian traffic, urban facilities and services, loading and unloading areas, security facilities). It has been a municipal initiative financed entirely with its own resources.

Changes it brought

The renovation of the Plaza has revitalised the historic centre of the town, which was declared an Asset of Cultural Interest in 1967, and has enhanced the town's heritage and tourism. It is also a new recreational area for the inhabitants, which until now was degraded. Moreover, the project has given an urban response to the topography and functional uses, adapting to the topographical conditions of the site without altering it and has improved the urban environment.

Transfer potential

This is a complex, long-term project involving many experts and a careful selection of materials to ensure a successful restoration with a conservation focus, so its potential transfer is not as simple as in other cases.

Main takeaways

- The result of the action adds value to tourism by attracting visitors to the city.
- It is essential to have political support and have appropriate experts in the field.



SLOW TOURISM AT ROMEA STRATA

Identity

- Quarto d'Altino, Italy
- 8 129 inhabitants, 28.33 km²
- <https://www.romeastrata.org/>

Initial challenge

The Municipality of Quarto d'Altino is suffering from being at the margin of the Venice Lagoon and being overseen by tourists visiting this area. It has been seeking to promote its tourism through numerous cycling routes. Its identity, including its historical one, on the combination of nature, religiosity, quiet spaces, and archaeological elements, involved the enhancement of a religious path from a tourist perspective.



Proposed solution

The enhancement of the Romea Strata cycling path began in 2016. The administration aimed to promote this pilgrimage route immersed in nature, in collaboration with the Pilgrimage Office of the Diocese of Vicenza and Veneto. They equipped it with signage for tourists and encouraged the influx of new tourists and explorers. The enhancement of the European path called "Romea Strata" by the Municipality aims to be part of a larger scale of slow tourism in Europe. This would make the Municipality of Quarto d'Altino visible on a map, creating interest among tourists from countries such as Austria and Germany. The Romea Strata is an important European route travelled by pilgrims who, starting from Central and Eastern Europe, made their way to Rome: from the Baltic Sea, they crossed Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, the Czech Republic, and Austria, passing the Alps to enter Northeastern Italy. The Romea Strata has been a journey of faith and culture that brought pilgrims across Europe. Before becoming a pilgrimage route, this itinerary was used for various purposes, including commercial ones. Human passage then led to the development of culture through the art and architecture that we encounter today along this route. The municipality has enhanced the crossing paths of the Romea Strata on its territory by creating three cycling variants that pass through Quarto d'Altino, intersecting religious references and places of worship. The Romea Strata has the characteristic of connecting abbeys and monasteries that still today offer rest and shelter to pilgrims.

Changes it brought

The work was very important, especially in building the relationship system, for the recognition of Quarto d'Altino as a designated stop by all state and foreign entities. It was also important to redevelop the three route variants to allow tourists (on foot and by bicycle) to safely traverse the proposed itineraries. Becoming part of a recognized European route (with cartographies, maps, infographics) available to foreign tourists increased the number of tourist visits to the area and daily passages, benefiting commercial operators and dining establishments.

Transfer potential

An action of this type is "easily" transferable, remembering that even a small municipality can be an important player in connecting larger realities; each municipality is not an island and can exploit the resources it already has, without having to invent something new but by utilizing the historical heritage that characterizes it. The transfer potential in this case is high, if and only if the administration is aware that the most important work is relational, followed by infrastructural work.

Main takeaways

Nearby magnetic cities offer significant tourism surpluses that can be positively exploited both to alleviate the phenomenon of overtourism and to attract people potentially interested in experiencing different leisure activities



WALKING AND CYCLING AS A TRAINING FOR LOCAL TOUR OPERATORS

Identity

- Quarto d'Altino, Italy
- 8 129 inhabitants, 28.33 km²
- urly.it/3a2wn
- Contact: Catia Boato (Municipality of Quarto d'Altino)
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Initial challenge

The Municipality of Quarto d'Altino is suffering from being at the margin of the Venice Lagoon and being overseen by tourists visiting this areas. It has therefore identified the need to divert tourists who visit the Venice lagoon from the large city crowds – and attract them. At the same time, the area is suffering from intensive tourism, which has strong negative impacts on the cultural heritage and natural environment.

Proposed solution

In 2016, local tourism entrepreneurs identified the need to maximise local natural resources to promote a more sustainable approach to tourism that would be less dependent on intense commercial phenomena. In particular, the project has focused on increasing the accommodation capacity of local operators while developing a strong sensitivity to sustainable tourism in accordance with the times of nature, its flora and fauna. The project was implemented by the Municipality of Quarto d'Altino, the Chamber of commerce, local tour operators and the Ciset (International Center for Studies on Tourism Economics) carried through a European Social Fund Funding.

Among the various initiatives, including local workshops and scientific insights within a degree course at the University of Venice, an educational event was organised in Quarto d'Altino in 2017. It involved more than 20 foreign tourism operators and showcased the unpublished aspects of Altinate and the Venice Lagoon, based on an experiential approach in a peer review with local operators. Through activities such as bike rides, boat trips, meetings with local artisans and producers, and typical food and wine tastings, the tour operators discovered the cultures and natural resources of this area and learned creative ways to offer them to their own clients.

Thirteen restaurants, hotels, B&Bs, navigation companies, and cultural agencies then created a system to launch Quarto d'Altino as a base for exploring the lagoon, positioning itself as a concrete and complementary tourist destination, partially alternative to Venice.

Changes it brought

The changes brought include awareness of the challenges in the tourism market, increased knowledge among hoteliers and businesses, and a growing trend in tourist traffic in the city.

Transfer potential

The transfer potential is moderate and linked to the attractiveness of the territory, as well as the administration's ability to engage tourism and hospitality operators, spreading knowledge and awareness that a new way of tourism, complementary to the aggressive marketing typical of magnetic cities, is equally satisfying for the local economy.

Main takeaways

Modernising commerce and constantly updating knowledge are necessary components for the concrete promotion of the territory.



UNCOVERING ARCHAEOLOGICAL SECRETS WITH REMOTE SENSING

Identity

- Quarto d'Altino, Italy
- 8 129 inhabitants, 28.33 km²
- urly.it/3a2xx
- Contact: La Carta di Altino – Mario Defina
mdefprof53@gmail.com



Initial challenge

The Municipality of Quarto d'Altino is suffering from being at the margin of the Venice Lagoon and being overseen by tourists visiting this areas. In addition, since the centuries preceding Romanization, Altino was an important city and port for the Ancient Veneti, the only urban settlement facing the lagoon, a capital that existed for more than a thousand years. Yet, this heritage is invisible being buried underneath existing land – which cannot be excavated – and is little accessible, not on touristic circuits and not linked to the stories of the people and populations who built it over the centuries. At the same time, municipal economic resources were insufficient to enhance the heritage

Proposed solution

The project aimed to make visitors aware of the richness and value of the tangible and intangible relics of Altino's history, guiding them in the rediscovery of their history. Using technology has enabled "revealing" a gigantic cultural and historical heritage still buried underground, to reconstruct the image of a hidden city through technology and later the imagination of visitors: remote sensing is a technique used to obtain information about objects or areas from a distance, without having direct physical contact with them. This technology relies on the use of sensors mounted on aerial or satellite platforms, which collect data by detecting and analysing the energy reflected or emitted by the observed objects.

The project, a collaboration between the University of Venice, scientific researchers, and the Italian museum network, began in 2011, with a funding from the Veneto Region for active citizenship. Remote sensing, has been the trigger for creating tangible and "touchable" materials through models: the exhibition "Altino, Before Venice" was first presented in 2014 and then in 2016. A new edition in 2024, attracted thousands of visitors. The team that was formed consisted of archaeologists, architects, web designers, creatives, video production experts, and, above all, young people.

Changes it brought

The project has enhanced the local potential to attract tourists interested in archaeology, making the area more accessible and marketable, as well as increasing the area's branding capacity. The change has also impacted the broad dissemination of territorial complexity knowledge, especially among young people. It involves the combined participation of multiple stakeholders from an intergenerational perspective, with cooperation among different age groups and professional levels, including the academic world and peer review groups. The project has made a traditionally "classic" operational field more dynamic by adapting it to new technological languages and the youth world. By integrating new tools and technological methods, the project has revitalized a field often seen as static and obsolete. These adaptations have made historical and cultural exploration more attractive and accessible to younger generations, who are more attuned to digital and interactive forms of learning and engagement. This dynamic approach not only preserves the rich heritage of the municipality but also ensures its continued relevance and appreciation by future generations.

Transfer potential

The theoretical approach is easy to understand how the use of technologies to support academic activities, applied to the municipal territory, is certainly useful for developing new collaborations, engaging stakeholders and interested parties, and using culture as a driver of change.

Main takeaways

- Stakeholders at a large scale are very useful, especially if they have academic knowledge to increase territorial competitiveness, understand what resources already exist, and how to enhance them.
- The importance of looking beyond territorial boundaries to create new wealth in sectors such as tourism, starting from intangible and historical resources.
- The past as a springboard for the future: historical cultural resources can build the present and future economy if positively exploited and in accordance with a sustainability criterion.

A FORMER TRAM DEPOT TO REMEMBER HISTORY

Identity

- Wrocław, Poland
- [893 506 inhabitants](#), 292.81 km²
- [Official page](#)



Initial challenge

Located in the southwestern part of Wrocław, on Grabiszynska St, this an unusual building from the end of the 19th century which was a "witness" to the city's complicated history. The depot, like the entire city, was destroyed during World War II, during the fighting for Festung Breslau. In 1945, when Wrocław became a Polish city, its residents rebuilt the partially destroyed buildings of the depot, which from then on served for Wrocław buses. In effort to find a new solution for the former tram depot, it was established as a state cultural institution in 2007. From 2009 to 2016, the Center operated as a local government institution of the city of Wrocław. The depot was a part of history that people needed to remember. It was a connected with „Solidarity” events in the past and it was important that it's function would reflect that. It also required a much needed renovation.

Proposed solution

In 2016, the Minister of Culture and the mayor of Wrocław, signed an agreement on co-organization of The Depot History Center taking advantage of the site's history to create a thematic museum. The Depot History Center was created in order to preserve important moments of historical experience. The historical and cultural values created by Poles in the Western lands after the period of great suffering and destruction of World War II were of great importance in the history of Poland. These values still have current power and educational significance in bringing the nations of Europe closer together and shaping a just international order. The depot witnessed many political changes and the Solidarity strikes in 1980.

As such, the heart of the Depot is the main exhibition „Wrocław 1945-2016,” concerning the post-war history of Wrocław, Lower Silesia and other regions incorporated into Poland as a result of the Second World War.

The exhibition plays with colours, well-known images and artefacts and spaces, to make the souvenirs, documents and photographs donated by the citizens of Wrocław alive. The exhibition shows the historical elements of the city—there are roads, a railway station, a butcher shop, a library, a newsstand and a maze. This enables the visitors to travel back in time and live the adventure with history. It was funded from EEA and Norway Grants.

Changes it brought

Since the place has been renovated it serves as a way to document and popularise knowledge about the post-World War II history of Wrocław as an important element of European heritage. The center organises educational activities aimed at respecting historical truth.

Transfer potential

Transforming historical building into a historic and cultural center requires a high level of investment, but the concept of transformation of a place with historical significance into a museum bears significance to the community.

Main takeaways

High-quality building revitalisation requires finding a well functioning system, extensive planning and high budget but the historical and cultural significance that it brings is invaluable.



CREATING A BRAND AROUND PAST PUBLIC TRANSPORT: WRO-TA

Identity

- Wrocław, Poland
- [893 506 inhabitants](#), 292.81 km²
- [More information about the tourist line](#)



Initial challenge

The trams in Wrocław are an integral part of city life. The historical vehicles were used as attractions before but it was sporadic and not organised under one brand. The challenge was to promote and increase the visibility of old trams and create tourist lines that will operate regularly. The historic trams are owned by both the City and non-governmental organizations so the challenge was also to bring them together, under one project.

Proposed solution

Wrocław joined the "[Find Your Greatness](#)" action planning network under the EU URBACT III programme. The city's goal was to create a new tourist product based on the historic tram infrastructure owned by both the city and non-governmental organizations (Urban Transport Supporters' Club and Wrocław Enthusiasts' Association). WRO-TA tourist line was an offer addressed to both tourists and residents of Wrocław who want to explore the city in an unusual, but at the same time attractive way. It lets them experience most important architectural monuments, but also natural values (the Odra riverbeds admired from numerous bridges along the line; parks and Promenade along the city moat). Two lines operate during summer months (June-August) and are available to everyone for the normal tram ticket rate. WRO-TA was promoted i.a. on Wrocław Tourism Organisation Website and on social media.

Changes it brought

Thanks to the WRO-TA tourist line, the historic vehicles became more visible, and people learned a lot about them. Participation in tours is easy, accessible and engaging. Thanks to WRO-TA, tourists are able to see the city's main attractions in the shortest possible time. The round trip on the proposed lines takes approximately 1.5 hours (in the case of the tram line, depending on the direction of travel, with a short stop at a monument included in the UNESCO World Cultural and Natural Heritage List, i.e. the Centennial Hall or in the city center - at the Opera House, and in the case of a bus line, among others, at the Depot History Center or Hydropolis).

Transfer potential

For creating a tourist line attraction, firstly, it is important to identify historic vehicles that could be used. To restore the vehicles, funds and coordination of the project are also needed.

Main takeaways

- To promote something, it is useful to have a coherent concept and catchphrase.
- Using historic infrastructure for tours is great way to spark interest in city's past and let the residents not only see the history but experience it for itself.



ORGANISING AN ART FESTIVAL: PUTTING LIGHT ON THE TRAM DEPOT

Identity

- Wroclaw, Poland
- [893 506 inhabitants](#), 292.81 km²
- [Event's summary](#)

Initial challenge

The challenge was to find a suitable place for the Art of Survival Review as well as find a usage for the Popowice tram depot and encourage people to visit this unusual place.



Proposed solution

The Art of Survival Review takes place every year in a different location. Buildings or public utility spaces are selected for the presentation of artistic projects - places forgotten, sometimes abandoned or neglected, suspended between past times of their glory and an uncertain and undefined future. One such place is the Popowice depot. Therefore, in 2023, another Art of Survival review was organized there.

Exhibitions and lectures were organized using the interiors of the old tram depot. Works by over 40 artists from Poland and abroad were presented, referring to the theme of the Review, which was "Erzac" (meaning substitute or a sample). The programme included not only the main exhibition, but also curatorial tours and meetings as part of the Social Scene. The foundation also prepared a rich accessibility program including sign language and "quiet hours" - visits for highly sensitive individuals.

Changes it brought

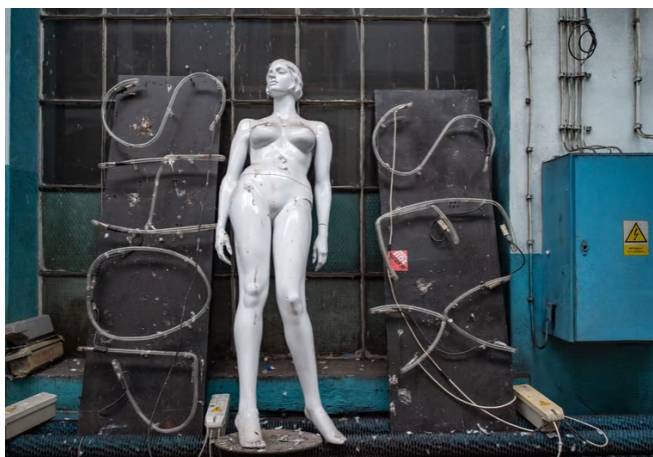
During the Festival, the depot area was open to everyone. It was possible to enter rooms that are not usually accessible. Additionally, it was possible to see the old depot in a new context - modern art arrangements in industrial areas.

Transfer potential

Possible to organize in spaces that are abandoned/forgotten and close to the center.

Main takeaways

- Organising art festivals in unconventional/interesting locations can bring benefits - the place becomes more recognizable, it can be seen from a new, artistic perspective.
- Good cooperation between festival organizers (here [Art Transparent Foundation](#)) and the place owner (here the Municipality) as well as artists is needed.
- In order for people to show up, the event must be publicised in local media.



“OPEN DAY” OF THE POPOWICE DEPOT

Identity

- Wrocław, Poland
- [893 506 inhabitants](#), 292.81 km²
- [Article](#)



Initial challenge

As the Popowice depot no longer serves its original function, it was forgotten by the older residents and completely unknown by the new ones. The challenge was to increase people’s awareness of Popowice depot and historical trams and to promote the place as a significant part of local heritage.

Proposed solution

Popowice depot „open day”, is a yearly event where the residents of all ages can see everything that is normally inaccessible to an outside viewer. There are historic trams, historic buses and accompanying attractions, including: lectures and tours of places normally inaccessible at the depot. Special tram and bus lines are always launched. The event ends with a parade of historic buses that takes the event participants throughout the city. There is also a souvenir shop, children’s zone and food trucks so the residents can spend a quality time with the family. The lectures are given by Tomasz Sielicki, a researcher of the history of urban transport in Wrocław, on the history of Wrocław tram transport, and Krzysztof Kołodziejczyk, president of the Urban Transport Supporters' Club. The event is funded and promoted by the city, organized by the aforementioned NGOs and the entry is free of charge.

Changes it brought

The “Open day” is a good opportunity to promote an interesting site (Popowice tram depot) that has been forgotten by the residents. The event brings people together and lets them have a great time and learn about their own city’s history.

Transfer potential

“Open day” is fairly easy to organise in different locations. It’s a great way to re-introduce the city residents to interesting places that are not frequented but have a great potential.

Main takeaways

People are glad to participate in the „open day” and curious about such initiatives, especially when they are organized somewhere they normally don’t get to visit.

