



## **RE-designing Access to Cultural Heritage for a wider participation in preservation, (re-)use and management of European Culture**

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## 1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This deliverable forms one of the concluding strands of the REACH project and relates to the *REACH findings on resilient European cultural heritage*. These findings have been drawn from across all project activities, specifically the four participatory pilots (Minorities heritage, Rural heritage, Small towns' heritage and Institutional heritage) and also the project's thematic workshops, one of which had a specific focus on resilience.

Given that resilience would play such an important role, it was discussed at the first meeting of project partners, where task leader ELTE presented its definition and context:

- resilience is crucial, since it reveals the capacity of the system to **renew and reorganise itself after disturbance**
- it offers risk mitigation and insurance **strategies** for the management of change and for social and economic development

This was further developed in deliverable D3.2 - *Selection of projects and mapping of clustered research findings* - which established a conceptual framework from which project partners could work.

This deliverable builds on D3.2, in this case analysing recent policy documents and considering how the concept of resilience, and associated terms, are used as part of current and ongoing political discourse. (Chapter 3). This lens is then used in the subsequent chapters to reflect on the work of the four participatory pilots. Their remit was not only to work with very different communities and stakeholders, based in different socio-economic situations and political climates, but to consider participatory approaches in the preservation, (re-)use and management of cultural heritage, with the aim of promoting social cohesion and integration. (Chapter 4).

The topics of resilience and social cohesion were given a prominent role within the REACH conference in Budapest in May 2018. The opinions of audience members were sought through world cafe discussion groups, with summaries drawn up to inform project understanding. Two years later, the *Resilience for European Cultural Heritage* workshop, held in Prague, invited speakers with multiple perspectives, who joined presenters from the project to provide a broad spectrum of views and opinions. In the course of pilot and workshop activities, a number of practices were identified that provide clear examples of resilience and resilient cultural heritage. Given the Covid-19 pandemic, further views and perspectives have been gathered. This was an additional task, but certainly an important one, as this period of time represents a significant disruption to the cultural heritage sector and wider society. (Chapter 5).

Having undertaken three years of debate on the subject of resilient cultural heritage, to build experience and understanding and explore effective participatory approaches, a set of policy and practice recommendations have been drawn up, that represent an outcome of the REACH project. (Chapter 6).

Resilience has always been an important strand of the REACH project, and this deliverable highlights its many and varied findings.



## 2 INTRODUCTION

### 2.1 BACKGROUND

As the notion of resilience was to be integral to the REACH project, it was important, at an early stage, to develop a conceptual framework, to support the project team's understanding and aid its subsequent activity. This framework was provided by deliverable D3.2 - *Selection of projects and mapping of clustered research findings*. It is therefore logical to provide an extract from that document, as background context on which this concluding deliverable on resilience is based.<sup>1</sup>

“Resilience has become a central concept of cultural heritage discourses since the early 2000s. It is not a coincidence that the dialogue on vulnerability and resilience has intensified over the past few years. From a disaster-based approach related to tangible cultural heritage, the resilience concept has been recently extended to comprise slower, but no less serious types of disturbance. This is clearly reflected in the Venice Declaration of 2012<sup>2</sup> which emphasised the role of cultural heritage in community resilience. From here, the extension of the adaptive cycle to the whole of culture is just a small step, both in its tangible and intangible aspects. In this context, cultural heritage appears, not only as a value to be preserved, but also as a tool that gives communities the opportunity to create a reserve that increases their resilience and renewal capabilities. This model aims to link the theory of resilience with the themes of preservation, (re-)use and management of cultural heritage. To create a bridge between the two concepts, participatory approaches are the most suitable.”

The concept of resilience began within the physical and engineering sciences, but over a 40-year period came to be more widely adopted.

“The most widespread definition of this concept was created in the 2000s: ‘the ability of a system to absorb disturbances and still retain its basic function and structure.’<sup>3</sup> A definition in 2010 shows how the concept can be used for social or cultural systems: ‘the capacity to change in order to maintain the same identity.’<sup>4</sup>

The third cultural heritage regime offers a more complex definition of cultural heritage, which relativises the role of authenticity. The continuous re-creation of heritage is defined through the lens of sustainability and resilience. The fear of loss of the past is transformed into the fear of loss of identity. The main question is change in preserving identity. How the community relates itself to change? How it manages change? How it adapts to change? The model explains how social systems engage in forward-looking behaviour and what types of institutions are developed to deal with anticipated uncertainties. Resilience is crucial, since it reveals the capacity of the community to renew and reorganise itself after disturbance. It offers mitigation of risk and insurance strategies for the management of change and for social and economic development.”

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<sup>1</sup> Text in this section is taken from pages 8-11 of REACH D3.2 - *Selection of projects and mapping of clustered research findings*. <https://www.reach-culture.eu/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/REACH-D3.2-Selection-of-projects-and-mapping-of-clustered-research-findings.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> Venice declaration on building resilience at the local level towards protected cultural heritage and climate change adaptation strategies, 20 March 2012 <https://www.unisdr.org/we/inform/publications/32399>

<sup>3</sup> Walker-Salt 2006: XIII

<sup>4</sup> Folke et al. 2010



According to David E. Beel: “In the context of community heritage, the notion of resilience as human agency is useful in two ways. One, it gives an appropriate understanding as to how different cultural repertoires have been maintained and passed through subsequent generations. Two, it neatly describes a set of relationships and connections that continue to maintain those cultural repertoires in the present day, especially as practices move towards digital forms.” Thus, in the case of resilient communities, their activity to maintain their heritage is represented by the concept of ‘heritage from below’ meaning a manifestation of counter hegemonic practises’. Therefore, these community heritage projects do not conform to a top-down narrative, but aim to represent the ‘ordinary’ lives and practices of the local community.”

## 2.2 ROLE OF THIS DELIVERABLE IN THE PROJECT

This deliverable sets out REACH findings on resilient European cultural heritage. It builds on prior deliverables, notably D3.2 - *Selection of projects and mapping of clustered research findings* - which traces the transdisciplinary conceptual frameworks from which the concept of resilience emerges, D4.2 - *Workshop results and lessons learnt* - in particular, the section reflecting on the dedicated REACH workshop, and D6.4 - *Resilience and social innovation in cultural heritage* - which provides a series of case studies on areas of resilient practice identified through the work of the REACH project team, as well as resilient cultural heritage (CH) responses to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Having defined the project’s conceptual framework, four participatory pilots, covering Minority (Roma) heritage, Rural heritage, Small towns’ heritage and Institutional heritage, worked with their respective communities to both build strong links and deeper understandings and to test initial REACH project assumptions on the nature of participation and how it supports both social cohesion and integration. These pilots produced a number of notable results and amongst them were clear examples of resilient cultural heritage. The activities and findings of the four pilots are presented in chapter 4.

The concepts of resilience and social cohesion were the focus of world cafe discussion groups at the REACH conference, held in Budapest in May 2018, with resilience also being the focus of the project workshop held in Prague in March 2020. The conference was held at an early stage of the project and invited stakeholders (cultural heritage professionals, researchers, policy makers) to discuss resilience from a ‘practice theory’ perspective. From this angle a number of practices were analysed including: collecting, restoring, performing, and archiving. An outcome of the discussions was the observation that “[t]rying not to fossilize objects, ideas or practices is key for making heritage resilient” (pg. 3 of the Budapest conference world cafe report on *Resilience in practice and interconnectedness*). The discussion highlighted some aspects of resilience that subsequent activities undertaken by the REACH project were able to verify, such as the pivotal role that communities play in increasing the resilience of heritage, and the importance for heritage institutions to adapt their narratives and values to the changing needs of diversified audiences. This initial recognition of the need to be adaptable to change in order to build resilience was further advanced via the workshop sessions in Prague. This workshop invited more in-depth reflections on resilience, including themed sessions *Understanding resilience of heritage*, *Place based heritage*, and *Difficult heritage* that introduced and debated case-studies with reference to the REACH participatory pilots and beyond. These events are reflected on in chapter 5.



The role of this deliverable is to reflect on the resilience related findings of the REACH project, specifically in terms of the preservation, (re-)use and management of CH. It also presents a review of current EU policy documents, undertaken to assess and understand the current resilience related discourse. The objective, after comparing these elements, is to both outline practical examples of resilient European cultural heritage and to make a series of policy and/or practice recommendations. This approach to thinking about resilience is at once conceptual and practical, a thinking that has been informed by the specificity of the European context.

## 2.3 APPROACH

Since the REACH project aimed to support and enhance social cohesion and the resilience of communities by means of cultural engagement, and to underline the societal significance of cultural heritage, the concepts of resilience and resilient cultural heritage/communities are central, especially for the final REACH conclusions. Given this, resilience has been discussed since the first meeting of project partners. It was a new concept to many, and therefore many discussions have taken place about perspectives and interpretations and how pertinent resilience was to different aspects of the project's work. This was no different when, in turn, it was introduced to associate project partners, workshop attendees and pilot participants.

An example of this internal project debate is "that the term resilience itself is difficult to grasp since it is multi-dimensional referring not only to abilities, but also to (internal) conditions and processes. It also includes considerations of 'resilience of ...', 'resilience for ...', 'resilience against ...' and 'resilience due to ...', etc. It is further complicated to define or describe 'resilience' because the term is not only multi-layered, but is also highly ambiguous, similar to another important term used by the REACH project 'cultural heritage'. Resilience can contain preservation, transformation, acceptance, and loss, alike. Furthermore, it can imply processes of emancipation and self-assertion as well as reactionary cultural understanding/identification, isolation and exclusion.'

REACH deliverable D3.1 - *Participatory models* - considered that the project's pilots could be loosely grouped, with Minority and Rural heritage providing a more community-oriented bottom-up approach, with Small towns' and Institutional heritage having more formal environments in which to operate. The perception of resilience also differed, according to these viewpoints. The main focus of the REACH project is undoubtedly community resilience, but the discussions around the resilience of heritage e.g. the policies for heritage preservation, social cohesion and employment was a dimension worth noting.

For the first half of the project, it was interesting to watch and understand how various REACH stakeholders defined the concept of resilience. However, the project team was also conscious that with the wide range of use, not only stemming from the natural sciences, but also financial and environmental sectors, there was a need to take a more rationalised approach, to apply the findings more tightly to the CH sphere, to be able to draw conclusions. Even so, the cultural heritage sector still provided a broad canvas for the project to work on and many definitions of resilience.



It was evident by the time of the Prague workshop, as the project was approaching its latter stages, that the focus had shifted from trying to arrive at a singular definition of ‘resilience’ or singular approach, to a more dynamic understanding. In a sense, resilience can be understood as a ‘travelling concept’:

*“[c]oncepts are not fixed. They travel between disciplines, between individual scholars, between historical periods and between geographically dispersed academic communities. Between disciplines, their meaning, reach and operational value differ. [...] All of these forms of travel render concepts flexible. It is this changeability that becomes part of their usefulness for a new methodology.”* (Bal, 2002: 24–25)

The introduction made by the REACH Project Coordinator, Neil Forbes, in Prague reflected this view. “The REACH project does not seek to define cultural heritage, as it is multi-faceted; rather, it explores enjoyment, engagement, (re-)use, and taking a people centred, whole society approach to CH. In a similar way, this workshop does not seek to define resilience too closely, instead considering interdisciplinary perspectives that place it in different social contexts.”

With this in mind, the REACH project proposes that the concept of resilience is performative and adaptive. The concept itself is in a way resilient – drawing on one of the oft-cited definitions of the term – it has the potential to bounce or flex back, or even forward, or sideward.<sup>5</sup> The idea of elasticity is key. Applying these ideas to preservation, (re-)use and management of cultural heritage, this deliverable draws on academic literature, current EU policy documents and direct project experiences and debates to set out the *REACH findings on resilient European Cultural Heritage*.

## 2.4 STRUCTURE OF THE DOCUMENT

Following the Executive Summary and this introduction, the deliverable has four further chapters.

Chapter 3 explores resilience as the management of change, examining a range of EU policy documents, to understand how the term and concept is being used in contemporary discourse. Its themes of resilience related to risk, vulnerability and sustainability will provide a context for the following chapters and conclusions.

A major pillar of the REACH project has been its four participatory pilots covering Minority/Roma heritage, Rural heritage, Small towns’ heritage and Institutional heritage. Chapter 4 explores themes of resilience, social cohesion and integration, considering how they are demonstrated within the pilots’ activities, highlighting elements that are of value to the wider CH and humanities communities.

The four pilots were not the only testbed for resilience in the REACH project. Chapter 5 provides a summary of the two Budapest conference world café discussion groups on *Resilience in practice and interconnectedness* and *Social cohesion and inequality* that took place early on in the project, as well as the *Resilience for European Cultural Heritage* workshop that took place in Prague during its final year.

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<sup>5</sup> ‘Recent conceptions of resilience de-emphasise notions of “bouncing back” to a previous state and place more emphasis on processes of “bouncing forward” involving absorption, learning, adaptation and transformation’ (Holtorf, 2018: 639).

REACH

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Chapter 5 then provides further illustration with summaries of other resilient case studies identified through the project's work, including details of the CH sector's response to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Chapter 6 reflects on the prior chapters and provides a series of practical and policy recommendations for the benefit of the CH and wider humanities sectors. This is followed by a concluding chapter 7.

### 3 RESILIENCE AS THE MANAGEMENT OF CHANGE

This chapter provides a review of the ways in which resilience is conceptualised in recent EU policy documents<sup>6</sup>. It takes into account the most relevant documents that have in some way articulated the concept of resilience, underscoring specific features that emerge in relation to the resilience of culture and/or cultural heritage. A number of thematic threads are identified and the relationship between the term 'resilience' and related ideas of 'risk', 'vulnerability' and 'sustainability' is also assessed. Furthermore, the way in which discourses of resilience can be mobilised beyond the immediacy of crisis and integrated into more long-term strategy/policy development is explored.

#### 3.1 RESILIENCE IN EU POLICY DOCUMENTS

As Walker and Cooper (2011) point out, the use of the term resilience associated with crisis has gained a prominent role in EU policy documents, especially from the end of the 2000s. The high frequency of the term, of course, does not necessarily signify a consolidation at the level of conceptualisation (Figure 1). However, beyond using resilience as an elusive buzzword, the documents formulate the objective of how to put resilient thinking into practice. Resilience often occurs related to environmental risks, economic crisis, social insecurities and in engineering contexts.

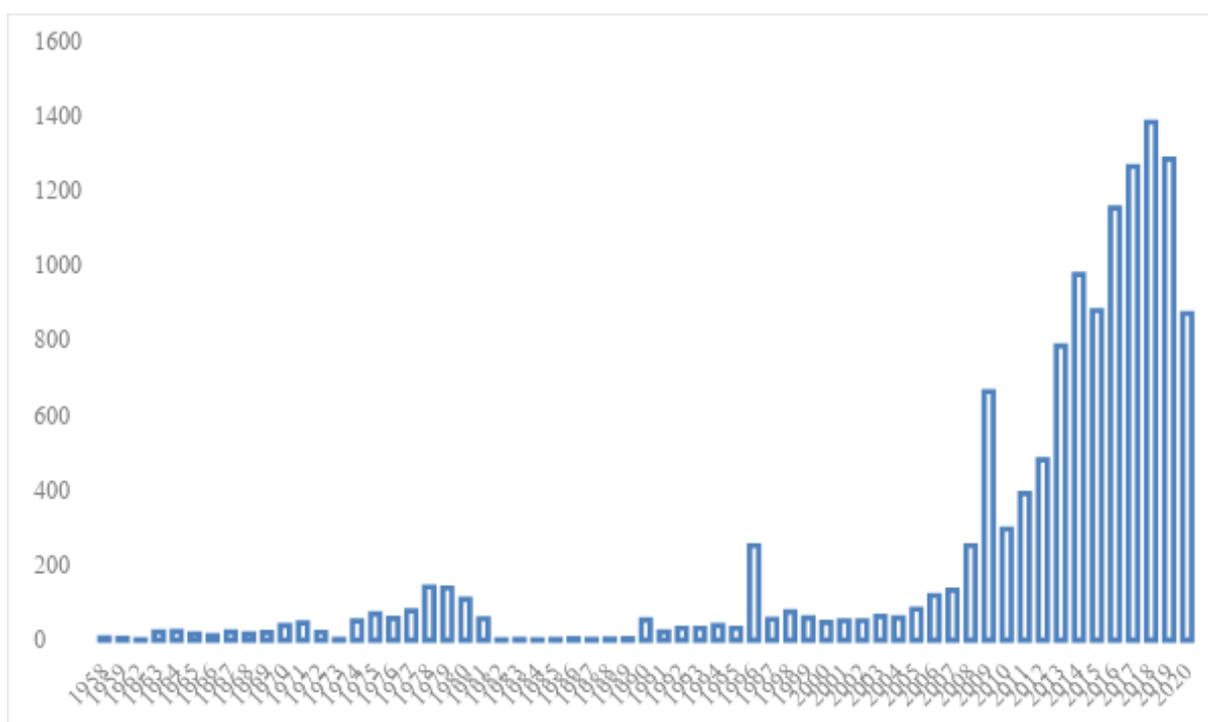


Figure 1: Frequency of occurrence of the term 'resilience' in EU publications  
(Publications Office of the European Union)

The following documents are taken into account:

- *The EU strategy on adaptation to climate change: Strengthening Europe's resilience to the impacts of climate change* (EC, 2013)
- *The Joint Research Centre (JRC) technical report on Culture and resilience* (EC, 2016)

<sup>6</sup> Publications Office of the European Union (<https://op.europa.eu/en/home>) serves as the database of the mapping activity.



- *Heritage at risk – EU research and innovation for a more resilient cultural heritage* (EC, 2018a)
- *White Paper on Resilience Management Guidelines for Critical Infrastructures* (EC, 2018b)
- *Best practices in sustainable management and safeguarding of cultural heritage in the EU – Research for CULT Committee* (EP, 2018)
- *Time for transformative resilience: The COVID-19 emergency* (EC, 2020).

### 3.2 CRITICAL POLICY DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

Critical Policy Discourse Analysis integrates Critical Discourse Analysis with Critical Policy Studies (Mulderrig et al., 2019). The focus is on the detailed textual analysis of policy documents to “*identify processes by which language (re)produces social practices and helps privilege certain ways of doing, thinking, and being over others*” (Mulderrig et al., 2019: 1). In the EU Policy documents here under review, **the idea of disaster risk reduction and of preservation is privileged over a thinking of resilience as the management of change**. Furthermore, although resilience has become more prevalent in EU policy discourse, the term is often conflated with related concepts or it is not clearly defined. This section attends to the language of these documents in more detail to analyse how resilience has been conceived to date in EU policy discourse.

The *Heritage at Risk Framework* (EC, 2018a) has been very influential in informing ideas around the preservation and management of heritage sites/monuments in EU policy making. This framework and its associated discourse of ‘risk’ centre on the idea that heritage is in need of protecting/safeguarding. It thus proposes a series of preventive and mitigation strategies that focus on risk management models and disaster prevention. Although the policy document opens with the statement that “*rather than being static, heritage evolves through our engagement with it*” (EC, 2018a: 2), it then proceeds to frame any change in the physical integrity of a structure/monument, any kind of deterioration or ruination, as a loss (See Holtorf, 2018).<sup>7</sup> The document is structured around the idea of identifying the different risk factors and threats to heritage with recommendations focusing on the development of surveying tools and diagnostic technologies (SMART technologies, 3D reconstructions etc). Arguably this framework has tangible rather than intangible heritage primarily as its focus.

The *Culture and Resilience* policy document (EC, 2016) focuses more specifically on intangible cultural heritage. Echoing the Heritage at Risk Framework in terms of discourses of risk and vulnerability, it analyses the cultural factors that impact the resilience of a society. It argues that “*adaptation and adaptive capacity depend on collective action*” and acknowledges that “*cultural differences will have a direct effect on a county’s resilience and adaptive capacity*” (EC, 2016: 8). A correlation is proposed between vulnerability and resilience, wherein less vulnerability implies more resilience and vice versa (p. 12.). What is of particular note is the focus on ‘adaptive capacity’ which is recognised as a key factor for building community and cultural resilience, but which is not valued in the same way when applied to the management of tangible cultural heritage. As noted in the previous paragraph, adaptation and change to the structures of physical monuments are still interpreted primarily as a loss.

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<sup>7</sup> Holtorf (2018) critiques the ‘heritage at risk’ framework arguing that “*loss of specific manifestations of heritage is an inevitable outcome of a living culture continuing to exist now and in a future that is going to be subjected to change and transformation compared with the present*” (p. 643).



While the idea of ‘adaptive capacity’ is attractive it should not be embraced uncritically (EC, 2016), as there is potential for exploitation in suggesting people are responsible for, or have failed in, not being flexible or resourceful enough, whereas problems often lie in larger governmental structures or with a lack of policy. Even when policies are in place, these are not always enacted or put into practice. In *Best Practices in Sustainable Management and Safeguarding of Cultural Heritage in the EU* (EP, 2018) there is a shift toward a more adaptive approach to physical preservation despite the report still being framed within the discourse of ‘safeguarding’. It is noted that *“the focus of the cultural heritage sector is no longer just on preservation and protection of monuments. It has become more important to be able to find new activities to take place in historic buildings and landscapes and to find new uses for old buildings (adaptive re-use)”* (p. 5). Although there is little reference to the term resilience in the report, it does touch on a concept which is closely related, namely ‘sustainable management’. The relationship between resilience management and sustainable management is explored in more detail in the section entitled ‘resilience and sustainability’ underneath. The final policy document under discussion, *Time for transformative resilience: The COVID-19 emergency*, is more explicit in its engagement with the discourse of resilience. Produced in response to the recent crisis of the Covid-19 pandemic, it calls for societal “transformative resilience” (EC, 2020). Referring to the oft-cited definition of resilience as the ability to ‘bounce forward’ through processes of adaptation and transformation, the report notes how the crisis requires permanent shifts in behaviour (EC, 2020). A distinction is made between ‘adaptive capacity’ and ‘transformation’ with a combination of both strategies being recommended for resilience-building within and beyond the current pandemic. Although this distinction is not clearly defined, one can infer that transformation is perhaps more radical and more disruptive (but positive in the long-term) than adaptation (EC, 2020).

### 3.3. FROM RISK TO RESILIENCE

In the EU Policy documents, ‘risk’ is often evoked in thinking about resilience across a variety of contexts and sectors – for example, in thinking about resilient cities (EC, 2012), climate change (EC, 2013) and cultural heritage (EC, 2016, 2018a, 2018b). Risk assessments are conducted as a preparatory/preventive measure with the aim of reducing/avoiding the negative impacts of a crisis. In the *White Paper on Resilience Management Guidelines for Critical Infrastructures* (EC, 2018d) the project consortium recommends a *“move from mere risk assessment/management towards resilience management, that is, focusing more on recovery capabilities (without losing the efforts to enhance prevention and preparedness)”* (EC, 2018d: 15).<sup>8</sup> The shift of focus from risk to resilience is framed as a ‘paradigm shift’ which they argue is reflected in the academic literature as well as visible at the EU policy level (EC, 2018d: 16). Although the white paper focuses on critical infrastructures rather than cultural heritage per se, the findings of the report are relevant to the REACH project. Critical infrastructures refer to services and systems which are deemed indispensable to the functioning of a society, such as, waste and water management systems, food and agriculture, public health, telecommunications and transportation. Not only do the REACH project pilots overlap with these sectors – for example, the small towns and rural heritage pilots --, but in a broader sense the impacts of investment in cultural heritage extend beyond the individual project or institution to create a ripple effect in the wider community/locality.

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<sup>8</sup> White paper developed as part of work undertaken by five Horizon 2020 DRS-07-2014 projects: DARWIN, IMPROVER, RESILENS, RESOLUTE and SMR.



Kamran (2020) highlights the *“role of cultural heritage (tangible and intangible heritage) as a means to tackle the economic dimension of resilience while analysing its linkage with infrastructure systems located in the periphery”* (p. 1). While Kamran (2020) explores how cultural heritage can boost the local economy in the form of tourism, which in turn provides an impetus for local authorities to maintain and upgrade the surrounding/supporting wider infrastructures, the REACH project extends this investigation further.

REACH findings on resilient European Cultural Heritage focus not only on the economic dimensions of resilience but also on the socio-relational, creative-educational, spatiotemporal and gendered dimensions of resilience (see discussion of the REACH participatory pilot in chapter 4).

### 3.4. VULNERABILITY AND RELATIONALITY

Risk is associated with vulnerability, be it vulnerability in a system or in a community. For example, in the context of critical infrastructures, increased interconnections in digital networks are associated with increased risk of failure – for example, a glitch which will cause a major disruption or cyber security risk. In the context of communities, increased interpersonal connections can have positive effects on social relations and capacity building, while in other spheres this increased openness to the other also heightens vulnerability. This is particularly true in the context of the current pandemic wherein contact in the form of physical touch is perceived as potentially dangerous. For cultural heritage contexts infrastructural and interpersonal connectedness is essential but it is also a risk factor. In the academic literature, theorist Judith Butler (2006) uses the term ‘precarity’ to describe the ways in which vulnerability and relationality interconnect. She proposes a fundamental relationality and interdependency between bodies, wherein some bodies are more vulnerable or at risk than others (Butler, 2006). This idea is particularly relevant when applied to thinking about minority heritage, but it can also be applied to community interactions with institutions and/or local authorities/governments (see discussion of the REACH pilots in chapter 4).

If risk is associated with vulnerability, then what does the shift to resilience entail? REACH proposes a thinking of resilience that accepts/embraces vulnerability as a precondition of existence, while looking to a future that is always already understood as uncertain. Uncertainty in this context isn’t necessarily negative or problematic, rather it enables contingency planning in the form of improving and strengthening organisations and communities’ adaptive capabilities. The ability to be flexible and to be able to adapt to shifting circumstances is one of the key components for building resilience, wherein resilience is understood as the management of change.

### 3.5. RESILIENCE AND SUSTAINABILITY

The terms resilience and sustainability are connected but not synonymous. Often both terms occur side-by-side in the literature and in policy documents (Marchese et al., 2018). Marchese et al. (2018) distinguish the terms with reference to differences in their temporal and spatial reach: resilience is interpreted as a reaction to an immediate crisis, an unexpected event and thus it is rooted in the present; whereas sustainability efforts are traditionally more future-orientated, developed with long-term goals in mind.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Marchese et al. (2018) cite Redman (2014) in their discussion of the spatial dimensions and Meacham (2016) in their discussion of the temporal dimensions.



They argue that “[t]here is significant opportunity to develop sustainability practices that are more consistent with resilience methods. An example of this approach is to frame sustainability as a critical function of a project, policy or system, which is to be maintained during and after a disturbance” (Marchese et al., 2018: 1279). **The proposal for an integrated approach between the policies and practices of resilience and sustainability is taken up by the REACH project to explore a thinking of resilience beyond the immediacy of crisis.**

To conclude the policy discourse analysis, it is noted that the term ‘sustainability’ is listed as one of the four objectives of the 2018 EU Year of Culture (EP, 2018: 16). Notably resilience doesn’t feature, the other categories being “innovation, preservation and engagement”. Sustainability is listed as objective two (following engagement) and is described as follows:

- *“Heritage in transition: re-imagining industrial, religious, military sites and landscapes*
- *Tourism and Heritage: responsible and sustainable tourism around cultural heritage.”* (EP, 2018: 16).

The focus on an integrated approach to resilience and sustainability proposes a thinking of resilience beyond the immediacy of crisis and this idea is developed further in the policy recommendations set out below (see chapter 6).



## 4 PILOT ANALYSIS

The REACH project established four participatory pilots that were each different in nature and working with diverse communities and stakeholders, in different socio-economic situations and political climates. The remit of each pilot was to undertake participatory activities with specifically identified stakeholder groups in order to consider which participatory approaches are most effective and, above all, which can raise the profile of cultural heritage (CH) in, and on behalf of, their communities. In the course of this activity, a number of practices were identified that provide clear examples of resilience and resilient cultural heritage.

### 4.1. RESILIENCE AND MINORITY/ROMA HERITAGE<sup>10</sup>

According to Gunnestad et al. (2010), resilience within minority groups is strengthened by various protective factors, such as social networks, ensuring external support; abilities and skills as the individual's own resources and the presence of meaning, values and faith, offering existential and cultural support. The existence of networks proves to be the strongest protective factor, signifying on the one hand family cohesion and on the other, increased contact between the minority and other groups that may multiply the effect and strength of the network factor. Abilities and skills may be activated through education, so in this case, the creation of more integrative and culturally relevant curricula is crucial, ensuring greater visibility and respect to the history and culture of various minority groups, canonised as part of national culture. Resilience through meaning and values may be ensured by the preservation of the mother tongue and the encouragement of bi-culturalism.

The concept of resilience emerges ever more recurrently in relation to Romani studies and the preservation of Roma culture. The ability of various Gypsy/Travelers/Romani groups to adapt cultural practices and identities to new environments arises in the following cases:

- presence of strong adaptive practices and cultural resilience in the face of assimilatory pressures (Greenfields & Smith, 2018)
- with regard to the various relationships and positions of Roma as minorities, facing the non-Roma majority societies
- specific ways of resilience and adaptation during state-socialist and communist regimes have been detected and researched, most importantly by Michael Stewart (1994) in Hungary and by Carol Silverman (2014) in Bulgaria.

Moreover, it is important to refer to the British professor emeritus of Romani Studies, Thomas Acton's (1974) typology of Gypsy/Travellers' resistance to state control, where he enumerates four key modes of adaptation:

- 1) the conservative approach, minimising contact or withdrawing inwardly
- 2) cultural disintegration
- 3) passing, competing by disguising ethnicity
- 4) cultural adaptation or the above-mentioned bricolage – only this option offers favourable strategies, enabling positive outcomes for the Roma community.

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<sup>10</sup> Further details of the Minority heritage pilot can be found at <https://www.reach-culture.eu/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/REACH-D5.2-Minority-heritage-pilot-results.pdf>



Thus, to conceptualise resilience in Roma cultural heritage, it is necessary to refer to a model where cultural practices are not maintained and managed in an isolated manner of cultural survival but in a semi-autonomous, culturally hybrid space.

As Bowers (2009) states, when analysing the Surrey Project<sup>11</sup>, focusing on the preservation of Roma heritage in the UK: *“The way a society treats its minorities is a litmus test of its civilization. – so, the refusal to accept Roma history into the mainstream is also a reflection on how willing the British society is to face up the questions who we are and what we have done.”* (p. 28.)

In the REACH Minority heritage pilot, these aspects and dimensions of resilience are clearly apparent. First of all, Roma heritage was chosen to be researched as something genuinely belonging to the majority cultural canon. Therefore, the ELTE team aimed at finding and analysing Roma cultural practices which were based on participation and dialogue.

During the first, preparatory month of the pilot, the main task of the researchers was the establishment of a contact list and the creation of the *network* of all existing cultural institutions, actors, stakeholders, related to Roma cultural heritage. After identifying the actors and the organisations (by understanding their relationship to Roma culture and heritage in a very broad sense), the pilot team organised meetings and local encounters to enable these various bodies to get to know each other and exchange their experiences. Therefore, referring back to statements by Gunnestad et al. (2010), the strengthening of acquaintances and the accentuated connection-buildings (between bottom-up initiatives and national/public bodies or among different civil society organisations) contributed to a much more resilient understanding of Roma heritage management.

Concerning the support of *abilities* and *skills*, as well as the emphasis on *bi-cultural values*, the REACH pilot proved that both formal and informal education are at the very centre of Roma heritage practices. Indeed, all the partner institutions or stakeholders had some connection to educational activities, where both Roma and non-Roma children (or teenagers or even adults) were involved. The Gandhi High School, the Talentum Art School, the UCCU Foundation<sup>12</sup>, the Roma country house in Hodász, the Roma local history collection in Újpest or the Independent Theatre are all eminent examples of transferring knowledge about Roma culture, languages, art and history (be they traditional practices or contemporary discourses). They all compensate for the lack of ‘official knowledge’ about Roma culture and society in Hungarian public or higher educational curricula, therefore with their various bottom-up approaches, they replace the absent top-down initiatives.

The resilience of Roma heritage has been confirmed in the importance of participatory activities. As participation in cultural heritage was at the heart of the REACH project, the Minority heritage pilot analysed these Roma participatory activities. Even if they have often been overlooked, they proved to have intrinsic, economic and societal benefits. According to the various geographical (urban or rural), social and political contexts (civil societies, public-founded and supported institutions, organisations belonging to different municipalities, etc), the involvement of communities in the planning and decision making phases was detectable.

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<sup>11</sup> <https://www.exploringsurreypast.org.uk/>

<sup>12</sup> A case study on the work of the UCCU Foundation was presented in D6.4: <https://www.reach-culture.eu/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/REACH-D6.4-Resilience-and-social-innovation-in-cultural-heritage-v2.pdf>

The inclusion of young people (even from a very early age) was a key to maintaining and (re-)using traditions and to safeguarding (in)angible heritage. The participation and empowerment of women (often trapped in patriarchal cultural patterns) were also very significant, with several of them holding leading community roles.



Figure 2: The participants of the local encounter at the Gandhi High School, Pécs.

Photograph: Patrik Mravik

Local encounters in Budapest, Hodász and Pécs offered transferable and intertwined practices concerning Minority heritage in urban and rural/deprived areas, cultural tourism and the preservation, (re-)use and management of intangible Roma heritage and of collective memory. On these occasions, several partners came together to share their knowledge and experiences concerning the sustainability of Roma heritage. Through the personal engagement of the local stakeholders, the pilot research team learnt about resilient good practices, different ways of preserving and managing Roma cultural traditions and contemporary practices in a terrain full of potential obstacles and difficulties. The three main local encounters focused on different topics and therefore, proposed different techniques and methods but what they all had in common was the importance of community involvement and the endeavour to create social cohesion through the presence and usage of cultural practices.

The local encounter in Hodász (in October 2018) comprised a workshop with experts and representatives of heritage communities, including a visit to the Hodász Roma Country House. The discussion was organised with the participation of cultural tourism and creative industry representatives and was dedicated to finding possible ways to preserve rural Roma heritage. During this event, various aspects of sustainability and opportunities arose to create more visibility for marginalised cultural heritage sites. The presence of the creative/cultural industry (represented by the director of Arts for Rural Development Foundation and the manager of Pro Progressione) strongly enabled the recognition of new perspectives and suggestions regarding the creation of rural festivals introducing Roma culture and/or the nomination of the Hodász Country House to the European Roma Cultural Routes.



The second local encounter in Budapest (in February 2019) took place as a REACH mini-conference, co-organised with students of the Cultural Heritage MA programme of the Atelier department. The students completed research during the first semester in three groups: researching the community, music and the fine arts heritage of the Roma community in the 8<sup>th</sup> District. During this research, they cooperated with local REACH partners and other stakeholders (such as the Glove Factory/Kesztyűgyár, the local Roma minority Self-Government, the Budapest Roma Cultural and Educational Centre (FROKK) and several Roma artists (musicians, painters who are also involved in community building practices.) The main objectives of this local encounter revolved around the questions of visibility and invisibility of urban Roma memory and cultural heritage. Several presentations and comments during the discussions proved that the Roma-related local history and cultural traditions and productions of the 8th district are extremely rich and varied.

The local encounter in Pécs (in May 2019) was again a workshop involving experts and representatives of heritage communities and incorporated a short visit to the Gandhi Secondary School in Pécs. This time, intangible Roma heritage was the focus of the event, with three heritage communities represented, each of them being listed on the national lists of Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH). The leaders (presidents of NGOs or other institutions, deputy/directors of schools, deputy head of department and activists) of these listed elements were accompanied by local Roma activists and the director of the national ICH authority. Discussion was initiated about the different position of communities, their activity and their involvement in the case of Hungarian Roma, where poverty and disadvantageous social status may very much balk the participation in cultural activities.

Summarising the main arguments and outcomes of these encounters, it is possible to identify the following resilient elements:

- the application of social design in order to create community resilience and sustainability by MOME Ecolab and the offering of communal and social architectural activities for children by architects working in the slums of the mine-area of Szúcs
- working with interdisciplinary methods, including various branches of art (theatre and dance, architecture and design)
- different methods of building networks in order to reach out to more communities, often located in deprived areas
- empowerment models by linking social enterprises and cultural integration to tackle disadvantaged social status.

#### **4.2. RESILIENCE AND RURAL HERITAGE<sup>13</sup>**

One of the central aims of the Rural heritage pilot, led by the University of Granada (UGR), has been to promote a more resilient rural cultural heritage, improving local engagement and public participation in policy making, economic, cultural and social initiatives and territorial and environmental management. The pilot has looked at relationships between agro-ecology, biodiversity and cultural health and resilience to investigate how rural landscapes can enhance resilience.

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<sup>13</sup> Further details of the Rural heritage pilot can be found at <https://www.reach-culture.eu/repository/Deliverables/REACH%20D5.4%20Rural%20heritage%20pilot%20results.pdf>



Many traditional cultures have developed ways of co-existing with, and ensuring the resilience of, bio-diverse ecosystems through careful management and stewardship of land and resources, and so the pilot has looked to empower local communities in sustaining and preserving such resilient rural heritage. Above all, the pilot has been interested in acquiring knowledge of mechanisms for generating the sustainability and resilience of many traditional socio-ecosystems, and for understanding the local systems of governance, management, participation, conflict resolution and other strategies that have rendered this possible. The implementation of co-governance initiatives in particular were expected to have a direct impact on reinforcing the resilience of rural heritage, increasing its capacity to face current challenges, which are directly connected to global and climate change.

The pilot primarily worked with irrigator communities in the south of Spain (Almería and Granada) in order to consider heritage awareness of agrarian culture, communal resources, resilience and empowerment in transmitting and benefitting from the past in the context of global and environmental change. The Spanish case studies considered Traditional and Historical Irrigation Agro-ecosystems (THIAS) as the basis of local economies, community cohesion and identity, and communal governance. THIAS shape cultural landscapes and are the grounds for tangible and intangible heritage with an accredited beneficial effect for local resilience. The pilot looked to work with local communities through participatory approaches in order to build their capacity and autonomy for local leaders in terms of co-governance. This capacity building feeds into themes of adaptation and resilience.

The pilot has also examined two Italian case studies – the *marcita* meadows of the Parco del Ticino (Ticino Park), and the town of Norcia and the surrounding Apennine mountains. Both of these case studies highlight the resilience of rural heritage when faced with disruptive occurrences as earthquakes/post-disaster management (Norcia) or new infrastructure developments such as the highway project (Ticino), especially when rural heritage is understood and evaluated in terms of local knowledge as being a key part of the historical and social system.

The role of rural landscape as heritage, with the *marcita* meadows as a key historical and heritage element, has been acknowledged by the Ticino Park stakeholders as a tool enhancing resilience when it: transmits shared values and local knowledge; promotes sustainability and raises awareness; promotes urban regeneration and stronger local networks for a different economic and social system; is part of mechanisms of circular economy. These initiatives have highlighted issues of resilience, tangible and intangible heritage, by connecting people at local level, and promoting an alternate economic model.

The Norcia case study looks towards the resilience of rural cultural heritage when faced with a series of disruptive events – here a series of calamitous earthquakes in 2016–2017 that have had serious ramifications on both the landscape and associated intangible and tangible heritage. Again, the promotion of alternate, sustainable economic models – where tourism works hand in hand with the local community's local knowledge and agri-food traditions, for example – is seen as a means of 'resilience thinking' (Botequilha-Leitão & Díaz-Varela, 2020) for rural heritage. In the case of earthquakes, rural landscape and heritage can therefore be a vector of resilience, especially in the first phase because it is generally less affected by the damage of the earthquake than urban areas, so it can be configured as an element of continuity, reassurance and connection with life before the traumatic event.

However, in the second phase of reconstruction, rural landscape and heritage are directly threatened by the choices of location of temporary residences made by emergency laws, new commercial buildings or shopping centres to replace damaged/lost places of commerce which, if not appropriate, can create discomfort and disagreement. Alternatively, a rethinking of the economic model could pave the way for a brighter, more resilient future for both tangible and intangible rural heritage, starting from a new circular, sustainable economy, based on the richness of the particular landscape in question, nourished by local knowledge and practices.

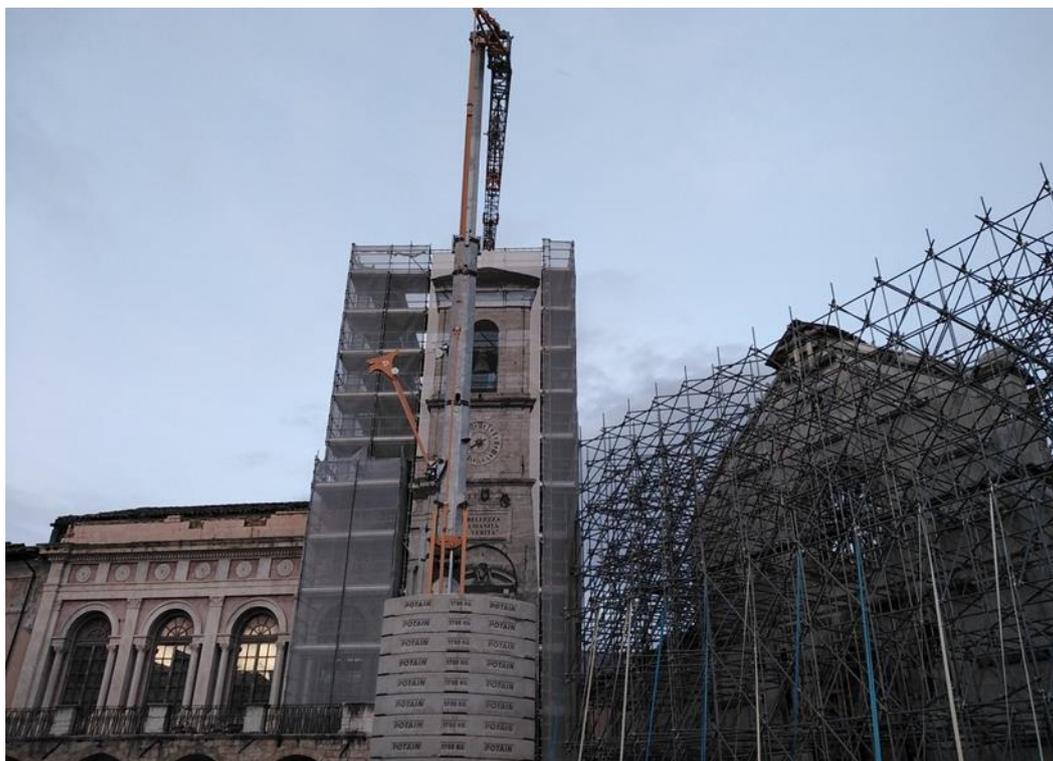


Figure 3: Rebuilding the Basilica of Saint Benedict, Norcia after the 2016/2017 earthquakes

Given the grounding themes of the rural heritage pilot, and its engagement with issues of water and soil heritage and biodiversity, it is also important to make the point about rural heritage's resilience as regards the context of the current climate emergency. Rural heritage needs to be resilient facing the strategic challenges of the climate crisis. Farming and natural environments are co-dependent, and often more traditional, less intensive farming systems are required; this is especially the case in contested landscapes where economic, cultural and ecological values are placed in competition. For example, there is currently an increasing acknowledgment of traditional systems for water management linked to a growing consciousness as regards global change and climate breakdown, and the important environmental role that these systems play in terms of local production and consumption. Furthermore, as rural communities face significant cultural, natural and ecological challenges, collaborative approaches are needed to enable those communities to 'bounce forward' and rebuild stronger after disruptive events. Decisions need to be made about which traditions and practices are the best, most resilient practices to (re)-use and preserve for future generations.



Joint action and innovative solutions are ways to approach the role of heritage in empowering communities' resilience and capacity towards the great changes that communities are called to face both now and in the future. Furthermore, it is important to build good public policy to drive just transitions where change is needed, that builds on local traditions and skills and that does not replace these but rather energises them. Bottom-up approaches are needed (at community level) working together at ground level to co-develop what 'good' looks like. Heritage is significant here because it has a lot of meaning and value: this meaning is determined by the community and so its voice must be heard. Heritage sites are complex systems that require knowledge of what is needed to maintain identity; of what needs to persist and what needs to evolve, adapt and transform. its ability to 'bounce forward'; in short, it is the capacity of a system to deal with change and continue to develop. Aspects of resilience include persistence, adaptability and transformability. Whereas some heritage conservation approaches tend to be based mainly on a past frame of reference aimed at maintaining heritage resources as unchanged as possible, in fact, change occurs constantly and change is inherent to heritage. Heritage thus calls for adaptive management – heritage sites are not static, but are constantly evolving and that evolution can be slow or fast, as well as predictable or unexpected. Resilience is thus about adaptation rather than resistance. There has arguably been community resilience for over 1,000 years in the Spanish communities that the pilot has worked with, with examples of best practice of adaptive management here being management by irrigator communities.

The pilot considers the potential of rural landscape to be regarded as both heritage and a tool to enhance resilience facing disruptive events. The landscape system can be a resource of resilience for local people if it is understood and evaluated in terms of local knowledge as a part of the historical and social system. Furthermore, it can embody and transmit tangible and intangible aspects that potentially encapsulate a sense of identity and place and these feelings are essential for a community – and a landscape's - resilience and recovery from disruptive events such as increasing infrastructure, socio-economic disruption or mismanagement of historic resources. The pilot's case studies clearly demonstrate that a rural landscape system can be a resource of resilience for local people if it is understood and evaluated in terms of local knowledge as a part of the historical and social system. Furthermore, the case studies show how a landscape embodies and transmits tangible and intangible aspects of heritage that encapsulate a deep sense of identity and place. These feelings are essential in terms of a community's and, indeed, heritage's resilience to recover from disruptive events. Rural heritage connects people at a local level and it can also connect and visualise social-ecological systems, thereby promoting sustainable regeneration as well as promoting local awareness and knowledge. It can also work as a resource and place of alternative economic models, turning rural landscape as heritage into an active and resilient element of continuity between past and future.

Resilient themes that have emerged from the pilot include:

- protection of rural landscapes and centuries old traditions, knowledge and practices that have sustained the area, that are being lost due to modernisation
- the need for local communities' voices to be heard, including demands for co- or self-governance and greater networking
- community campaigns to raise public awareness of the rural consequences to current policies and development, through educational programmes with schools, unions and farmers, and to directly influence politicians



- despite the loss of houses and important community buildings as a result of an earthquake, the resilience and security of the rural landscape has enabled the community to cope in difficult circumstances
- rural heritage is continuously evolving, resilience in this context is about adaptation rather than resistance.

#### 4.3. RESILIENCE AND SMALL TOWNS HERITAGE<sup>14</sup>

This pilot focused on the challenges and perspectives of small towns. Recent geographical studies define a small town as one that has a population of under 20,000 people, although there are sometimes also economic criteria, depending on their location. Towns are often in the vicinity of a city, usually in the countryside and so have both urban and rural influences.

The Small towns' pilot has worked with an assumption that cultural heritage is an asset that should be used as a resource by small towns in their strategies of development, so that the towns become more sustainable and resilient. This is the ideal scenario that has also been endorsed by many recent policies and agendas of territorial development, though their accent may vary. For instance, the Territorial Agenda 2030 (2020), which is currently being prepared, considers cultural and natural heritage as a resource for development of various places, including small towns, and accentuate their sustainable use. The recently published orientation paper Urban Agenda for the EU (2019) has adopted a similar tone, but put emphasis on the sustainable development of cities, while explicitly considering cultural heritage as a "factor that increases the resilience of a city" and as "a source or asset of resilience" (Ibid: 46). Yet, having built on recent developments in theory of resilience and cultural heritage, having adopted an actor-oriented perspective and critical heritage studies approach, and having delved into practical examples of small-towns and debates with stakeholders, the pilot problematized and revised the initial idea.

The concept of resilience has been circulating in urban studies for at least two decades. 'Urban resilience' has been formulated from the planning perspective as the ability of the urban system (consisting of both material and human dimension) to survive various types of risks and hazards, both natural and man-made (Meerow et al. 2016). In such a form the concept of resilience entered heritage studies in the wake of the last global economic recession of 2008. Building on the (often implicit) premise that cultural heritage embedded in the local environment (in this case small town) provides the symbolic basis for the identity of people and place, heritage experts argued that the urban system cannot recover integrity and character of the place after a disaster without restoration/survival of local cultural heritage. By emphasising the role of heritage as a major prerequisite for community resilience, they called for inclusion of heritage as an indispensable prerequisite for any successful attempt at post-disaster reconstruction within the disaster risk reduction management (e.g. various UNESCO initiatives, see UNESCO 2016).

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<sup>14</sup> Further details of the Small towns' heritage pilot can be found at <https://www.reach-culture.eu/project/public-deliverables>



Recent developments significantly altered and problematised the notion of heritage, stripped it of its modernist connotations, aspirations to objectivity and universality. Since 1980s, expert led technocratic perspective on cultural heritage, fuelled by nation state self-legitimation and characterised by highly centralised top-down institutional hierarchies and a focus on tangible heritage and art-history perspective, gave way to a more open understanding of culture and cultural heritage as related to collective memory (Halbwachs 2008). In this process, which can be broadly attributed to the general shift from organised towards “late modernity” (Wagner 2013), the definition of heritage and recognition of heritage values significantly opened up and became a part of an open public debate. What followed, especially since early 2000s, was an unprecedented pluralisation of “heritages” and the widespread heritagisation of the “pasts” and “collective memory”. Critical heritage studies emphasise the interconnection of heritage discourse with politics and its instrumentalisation reinforcing existing power hierarchies.

This process was further fuelled by EU cultural policies, aiming at the development of sustainable and participative heritage, which would represent local communities rather than elitist visions (Calligaro 2013). An important impulse came also from the changing political economy with the dominant neoliberal approaches that promote rolling-back of the state also affecting heritage management and the consequential commodification of heritage in the context of mass tourism (retro marketing etc.).

In the perspective of the CUNI pilot team, resilience can be seen in three parts, and thus differentiate:

- resilience of heritage, which may be defined as capacity not to be lost
- resilience of preservation, (re-)use and management of cultural heritage, which is their capacity to withstand discontent from stakeholders
- social resilience, that concerns small towns and their communities, including various stakeholders and subgroups, but also society at large, as small towns are part of larger socio-spatial structures.

The last point, and the major concern of the pilot, is the most complicated, as it means many different aspects, such as the capacity of small towns to recover and reproduce themselves, social cohesion of their population, adaptability to change, strengthened economic potential, etc. In order to further operationalise the concept of social resilience for the pilot’s agenda, the team has drawn on a recent body of literature on social, community and place-based resilience that has defined the criteria of resilient communities. While accentuating different aspects, the authors largely agree on the importance of available resources; the capacity to develop and preserve them, as well as use them in a way that exploit their potential; the importance of hard and soft qualities of the community, such as active agents, community networks or people-place connections (Magis 2010; Macleand et al 2004). Some authors pushed the issue further and stressed the capability of communities to steer the change, such as Mehmood, who in regard to (small) towns, defined urban resilience “as a proactive rather than reactive view to planning, policy-making and strategic steering in which communities play a vital role for resilient place shaping through their capacity for active learning, robustness, ability to innovate and adaptability to change.” (Mehmood 2016: 413). This provided the pilot with the question, how far heritage serves not just durability of the community, but also its capacity to adapt to changing conditions and take proactive role. These insights have helped the pilot’s team to outline three axes, around which debates with stakeholders and analysis of regions were structured:

- heritage as resource: what is considered heritage and why

- uses of heritage: how is heritage used and managed, with what impact
- CH actors and institutions: their potentials and limits.

Combining adopted theoretical position with pilot's empirical evidence, an important revision became obvious. Heritage is not a positive asset per se, as many policy documents seem to imply, since there are inherited things from the past in small towns that are seen as burden, as "unwanted heritage", or otherwise difficult to recognise as a valuable source. They can remain unrecognised and unexploited, but also be sources of contention. The management, (re-)uses and preservation of heritage can also have detrimental effects, as over-touristification illustrates. And the road to resilience can also be jeopardised on the side of involved CH actors and stakeholders, where lack of skills and cooperation, wrong communication, or low personal capacity may block or even reverse the potential of heritage. The relationship between heritage and small towns' resilience thus turns out as more complex and open ended: heritage can enhance resilience of a small town, it can have zero effect, but it can also have a contrary effect, and actually increase vulnerability of a small town.

The objective of the pilot was to illustrate this proposition through mapping the heritage practices in small towns of the researched regions, while also developing it through discussions and collaborative research during local encounters with associated partners who represented CH stakeholders.

The Small towns' heritage pilot's first local encounter was organised in Prague, in February 2018. It attracted 25 representatives from several associated partners (APs), based across Europe: municipal and regional actors, governmental institutions and non-governmental organisations, including voluntary bodies and projects. The debate was fuelled by interesting cases of participatory activities in relation to cultural heritage.



Figure 4: First local encounter that brought representatives of 25 organisation together



When applying for the projects of regional culture development in Slovakia, applications have to address area and socio-economic development general plans. The problem is that they tend to describe mainly material (physical) characteristics of local heritage, not including intangible heritage or folklore thus, the majority of projects' applications are focused on tangible heritage objects such as architecture, monuments and statues; funding renovation and preservation activities.

The problem of over-touristification of small towns was highlighted by the case of Český Krumlov. Although the town successfully entered the UNESCO World Heritage list in 1992 and has prospered economically since then, decades on, it suffers from the social effects of depopulation of locals, the town centre is over-crowded and the feeling of authentic culture is seen as lacking by the local community, which is mostly indifferent to the privatised tourist industry.

In contrast, Svidník Municipality lacks wider transport connection to the largest urban centres, its tourism problem is therefore due to the limited number of tourists that it can bring in, an issue compounded by the lack of related infrastructure capacities such as hotels and restaurants. Local people feel that their locality would benefit from a highway being built to provide a connection to the regional centre. However, this sits within the regional government's development strategy and isn't seen as a regional priority.

A further stakeholder meeting took place in Prague in January 2019. Its goal was to present, discuss and identify topics of interaction between top-down and bottom-up initiatives of local development linked to the cultural heritage in small towns. Based on experience, CzechTourism identified a crucial topic in small towns' promotion through cultural heritage: to develop a strong local-based tourism branding, i.e. to establish a tourist portfolio combining local cultural and natural attributes. To achieve this, it is useful to invent a narrative, e.g. a complex set of small castles on the river Orlice, reminiscent of Loire-castles.

At the level of small towns' communities, encouraging local people to use their local heritage occurs in two steps: at first, events are organised that arouse communal interest and identify with local heritage. Once communal interest is initiated, the second step is for local people to be supported to carry out the activities by themselves (via local interested societies, NGOs, clubs etc.). This support usually comprises passing on know-how and methods of how to run heritage-based activities and events (legislative, management of events, financial policy, PR and communication strategy).

Another meeting in Prague was held on February 15, 2019. Community data has identified the lack of young adults' participation in the Vysočina region, but this is not as a result of their passivity, it is mainly due the lack of municipal social network for these citizens, especially healthcare and education. This has resulted in young people studying in larger cities, but not returning to settle in their hometowns after graduation, often rather seeking the culture and attractions of larger cities such as Jihlava. This has detrimental consequences for small towns.

The issue of municipal museums was raised. They are supposed to be the initiators of cultural heritage participation in small towns, but are understaffed, overwhelmed by bureaucratic work, thus lacking the time for expert work on heritage and its utilisation for strengthening the community. An alternative viewpoint considered that it is a problem of interaction between institutions and municipalities.



A significant feature is how local communities are addressed, as “Seniors do not need to be addressed by Instagram, they read newspapers, but youngsters will attend virtually every Facebook event...”.

There is an assumption that heritage and identity lead to a sense of community. However, it appears that heritage is not always as important as economic factors. For historic towns, tourism and the town’s own self-image are a positive factor, especially in rural areas, although some towns, nearer to cities, have redefined themselves several times. This makes resilience and CH a complicated issue.

The local encounters identified several resilient themes, particularly the:

- persisting tendency to limit the idea of heritage in small-town setting to old and tangible monuments
- discrepancies between the values of local residents and the perspectives of agencies, especially regarding local planning priorities
- double-edged relationships between tourism and local sustainability
- loss of potential of young people who move away from small towns into cities
- need to interest and involve people in generating CH activities in their communities and finding a brand for their town
- capacity of staff to fulfil all heritage service roles in small towns
- impact of participation by the local citizenries, including how they are reached, in all phases of the heritage practices on their success or failure.

#### **4.4. RESILIENCE AND INSTITUTIONAL HERITAGE<sup>15</sup>**

The SPK led pilot on Institutional heritage took place at a pivotal moment for the sector, one in which museums are trying to redefine themselves both individually and collectively, to understand the role that they can play in the 21st century. Specifically, three museums were involved: the Industrie- und Filmmuseum (Industry- and Film Museum) in Wolfen, the Haus der Geschichte (House of History) in Wittenberg and the Museum für Islamische Kunst (Museum for Islamic Art.) in Berlin. During the pilot, interviews, discussions and observations took place involving both staff members and voluntary participants to enable the pilot to take into account a wide range of aspects of participatory and collaborative museum work, including the diversity of parties (directly and indirectly) involved, motivations, objectives and methods, as well as impacts, possibilities and limitations for individuals, the museums and society.

Even though the initiatives and framework conditions of the three institutions vary considerably, they demonstrate a common attitude: the interlocutors reaffirmed the importance of strong relationships with the diverse internal and external stakeholders or public (who form the constituent community) and emphasised the important contribution of museums and collections to communities and society in general. Therefore, interaction, relation and connectivity, as well as relevance and sustainability were key issues in this exchange. The potential to enhance activities, as well as limiting factors, were of particular interest. It became clear that such efforts are embedded in very complex networks consisting of the communities, the institution, the collection, and external structures, which affect different levels implying practical, material, intellectual, emotional and social dimensions.

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<sup>15</sup> Further details of the Institutional heritage pilot can be found at <https://www.reach-culture.eu/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/REACH-D5.3-Institutional-heritage-pilot-results-revised.pdf>



Consequently, the discussion on the resilience of cultural heritage (in institutions) must involve all actors and all levels.

During the interviews conducted, the term resilience did not play a central role. Indeed, at least in Germany, it seems to be rarely used in cultural discourse and that when it is, it is usually in a reactionary context. Rather, reflections among practitioners were concentrated on categories such as communities, access(-ibility), interaction, visibility, appreciation, empowerment, relevance, plurality and sustainability. These are features that can be strongly linked with the idea of resilience which can be understood as the (individual and collective) “capacity to deal with change and continue to develop” (Stockholm Resilience Centre n.d.) and as a question of “human agency and social systems” (Beel et al. 2017: 460).

Especially in the case of CH-institutions and institutionalised CH, the complexity is evident since the idea of resilience can concern very different elements characterised by a high degree of interrelationship: people, communities, society (including politics) and cultures (including cultural manifestations, public discourses, customs, habits, etc.). The institutions are involved in both categories - as subjects/groups of stakeholders and as part of the (negotiated/ changing) tangible and intangible culture: premises, collections, presentations, narratives, knowledge, techniques, and practices, etc.

Especially with regard to the parties involved that include institutional management, staff, booster and funding bodies, politics, audience, local communities, source communities, society, this list already shows that reflections on resilience can include a broad spectrum of notions, dimensions and implications of resilience that can be mutually supportive but also contradicting and disturbing.

However, besides this conceptual and practical complexity, it is evident that human activities are at the core of resilience. Here it has to be taken into account that these activities, the development of responses to challenges, are happening in a broader context. Each party acts in various systems, each micro-system is part of/or overlaps with further systems. A differentiation between systems (perhaps in contrast to natural or material science contexts) is seldom clearly defined and is constantly changing. Thus, thinking of resilience leads to the importance of the consideration of (inter-)relationships, connections, interdependencies and variability.

Besides these conceptual difficulties (that could not be comprehensively discussed and developed here) and turning back to REACH’s aim to support and enhance social cohesion and the resilience of communities by means of cultural engagement, and to underline the societal significance of CH, it is possible to provide brief insights into the position of institutions within this context. It becomes clear that they can be an important supportive element, and at the same time, a body needing broad support.

Institutions can provide access to cultural assets, knowledge, practices etc., and put them up for discussions, offer a space for encounters, debates, inspiration, creations, collaboration and support, and be an interlocutor and a partner for exchange and action. These joint interactions provide, thus, multiple acquaintances, understandings and social cohesion (which can include the institution itself).



By encouraging joint reflections and activities around/with cultural manifestations, institutions can enhance connectedness between the past and the present, with local and distant regions, with everyday issues and new discoveries. In doing so, they can prove and strengthen the relevance of CH for current discussions and actions.

At the same time, institutions need comprehensive and broad support: the acceptance by/commitment of the communities, the acknowledgment and assistance by the politics, and the recognition by/common agreement of the whole society. On this basis, institutions can become/be/remain a lively part of the public discourse, gain room for manoeuvre and maintain CH as a relevant public interest feature.

The Industrie- und Filmmuseum was visited in March 2019. Interviews and discussions were conducted with museum staff, management and participants and the museum's initiative *Bilderschau* (Picture Show) was visited. The main focus was hereby on the significance of involving activities for the communities and the institution (and their relationship) as well as the possibilities to intensify, stabilise and sustain the civic engagement. Although the *Bilderschau* began as a data enrichment exercise, the act of bringing retired workers back to their former workplace enabled them to reminisce, bond, and rediscover a sense of identity and value.

The Haus der Geschichte was visited once in May 2019 to conduct interviews with museum management, staff and volunteers. It was also possible to join a guided tour of the exhibition, led by a volunteer. Besides discussing the significance of the volunteering service for participants, the museum and the city, it was especially interesting to consider the structural conditions of such commitment. In particular, the need for long-term approaches and the improvement of the general frameworks (especially with regard to the financial dimensions of civic engagement) were addressed.

The Museum für Islamische Kunst was visited several times in the summer of 2019, in relation to the Multaka, TAMAM, Gemeinsame Vergangenheit - Gemeinsame Zukunft (Shared Past - Shared Future) projects, to speak to and interview project staff and participants, and to join guided tours. The focus was on facilitating access to museums, their collections and their work, as well as of involving people in the museum (work) who would ordinarily have little access to museums, and who have, for a long time, been neglected in museums' work. A further topic was the question of how far historico-cultural collections can contribute to public debates on identities, heterogeneity and ambiguities, and to what extent dealing with them helps to face current (individual and social) challenges.

The Multaka project<sup>16</sup>, for example, arose as a response to the significant migration of refugees to Europe. Its aim was less about imparting knowledge and the discussion of museums objects, and more to stimulate conversation and encounters. Through joint exchange, the project attempts to reduce the distance between museum employees/guides and the public. This was achieved through the appointment of volunteer guides, who are not themselves museum professionals, as this enables a peer-to-peer (non-museum) approach, which has been appreciated by very different audiences.

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<sup>16</sup> A case study on the Multaka project was presented in D6.4: <https://www.reach-culture.eu/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/REACH-D6.4-Resilience-and-social-innovation-in-cultural-heritage-v2.pdf>



Figure 5: Participants of a guided tour of the project “Multaka” in the Museum für Byzantinischen Kunst and Skulpturensammlung, (Bodemuseum, SMB-PK) © Staatliche Museen Berlin, Museum für Islamische Kunst. Photograph: Milena Schlösser

The focus of interest on museum’s work in society, has become an important starting point for activities which have led to the consideration of diverse stakeholders/the public and to the development of various formats and methods. Considering changes to target groups and their needs, leads to adaptations, new approaches and the development of target groups/partners. By including non-museums professionals, using the collection for discussions on social, political, historic, cultural issues, and focusing on dialogical exchange of narratives and experiences, all parties involved gain new perspectives in regard to cultural heritage and its significance (for the past, present, and future), to history and historical development, to interrelationships and to current daily life experiences. The focus on dialogue has become a new kind of (cultural) education.

To the discussion on resilience, the Institutional heritage pilot contributes the following reflections: concerning the communities

- joint discussion and trustful interaction are indispensable elements of social life and thus fundamental for considerations of resilience
- people/communities need access (physical, intellectual, to information/collections etc.)
- CH, and in particular museums’ collections, can provide links (between common and less familiar contexts) and be used as references in facing and negotiating challenges
- CH has to be accessible and used in diverse ways (respecting their protection and preservation)
- CH has to be connected with current issues of communities/society, their needs and wishes concerning the institution
- institutions are important facilities to strengthen the relevance of CH and to support communities in their processes of negotiations



- institutions have to develop their work (in correspondence with internal and external development) – (re-)considering objectives, approaches, procedures, tools and structures to be more diversified, extended and collaborative
- institutions have to perceive themselves/be perceived by the communities, stakeholders and society as reliable, engaged and relevant partners, interlocutors, mediators
- institutions need appreciation, affirmation and commitment by the communities, the society and the stakeholders (including administration, politicians, etc.)
- institutions need suitable diversified frameworks to fulfil and develop their work and role.

## 5. REACH EVENTS AND CASE STUDIES

### 5.1 BUDAPEST CONFERENCE WORLD CAFE DISCUSSIONS<sup>17</sup>

During the REACH conference that took place in Budapest, 10th–11th May 2018, the opinions of the audience were sought, with participants encouraged to engage in collaborative dialogues about two main issues: social cohesion and resilience. Conversations were held at different tables and all participants had the opportunity to contribute insights and ideas to both topics.

The social cohesion table, hosted by Alexandra Bitušíková from Matej Bel University, discussed inclusive approaches to cultural participation, with a focus on the integration of groups and communities (from refugees to seasonal migrant workers) most likely to be excluded from cultural heritage experiences. The conversations highlighted several problematic questions: an imbalance between ‘old’ Western democracies and ‘new’ Central and Eastern European ones in terms of experimenting with participatory methods and addressing inclusivity, the latter countries still lack experience; a generational gap in the use and enjoyment of heritage, young people are becoming less involved; the question of unwanted heritage and the improper uses of heritage as false history; the social and economic obstacles preventing groups of people living in ghettos and peripheries from participating in cultural activities.



Figure 6: Alexandra Bitušíková leading a world café discussion group

In addition to these analytical insights, the participants also explored ideas about good practices designed to enhance social cohesion by harnessing the potential of participatory approaches. Their suggestions include: novel uses of the performing arts to stimulate the interest and participation of young people; educational programmes that incentivise story-telling on the part of minority groups;

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<sup>17</sup> The summaries of the Budapest conference world café discussions can be found on the REACH website: <https://www.reach-culture.eu/events/opening-conference-in-budapest>



targeted urban projects, such as urban gardening, as a way to foster the integration of migrants in local life; and the need to find appropriate measures to assess the impact, on social cohesion and (in)equality, of participatory and collaborative approaches.

The host of the resilience table, Hilmar Schäfer from Viadrina European University, solicited participants to think about cultural heritage not as something frozen in material form, but as a set or 'flow' of practices changing in time and space. These practices include not just collecting, restoring or displaying artefacts, but also evaluating, narrating, interpreting and managing heritage. The concept of resilience, therefore, should be reconsidered in the light of this perspective. The ensuing discussion focused mostly on what is to be done in order to increase the resilience of cultural heritage. Several ideas were put forward: attending to the links between tangible and intangible aspects of CH is key to attain resilience; resilience also depends on making heritage relevant in the current moment, adapting narratives and attributing new values to capture the attention of diversified audiences; a mixture of stability and dynamism is needed to build resilient networks for communities and heritage; increasing equality in terms of gender, ethnic representation, economic, social and cultural capital is also crucial.

Participants pointed out the interconnections between resilience and broader issues related to the making of heritage, such as who defines the values and narratives that preside over the selection of heritage; the role of tourism in strengthening or weakening the resilience of heritage sites; and the ways in which Information Communication Technologies (ICT) is enabling innovative forms of transmission, but also creating a distance between users and the original, 'authentic' heritage objects. Ultimately, building resilience requires paying attention to the intersecting practices that contribute, at various levels, to the processes of cultural production whereby heritage is created, transmitted and kept alive.

## 5.2 PRAGUE WORKSHOP ON RESILIENT CULTURAL HERITAGE<sup>18</sup>

The introductory section of this deliverable outlined the REACH project team's approach to defining resilient cultural heritage and that by the time of the dedicated workshop in Prague, in March 2020, a more flexible, 'travelling concept' had been adopted. This enabled workshop presenters to address resilience in various ways and to different degrees. Some presenters talked about resilience implicitly, whereas others tried to apply the concept more consciously. This resulted in multiple meanings of resilience in relation to cultural heritage, partly caused by diversity – and at times lack of clarity – in terms of what resilience is, who or what is seen as the (ultimate) subject of resilience, and what challenges are imagined.

The first session *Understanding resilience of heritage* featured Hana Cervinkova who described results from her work to reclaim/uncover the hidden, silent histories of minorities in Central Europe that have been forgotten and are not talked about by today's populations. During the 1980s, a Jewish cemetery, that very few people were interested in, was saved. Following the cleaning of 4,000 tombstones, history, heritage and memory was restored, enabling family graves to be rediscovered. When looking for concepts to understand work differently, unlike some methods, resilience incorporates strength and positives as a basis for research, rather than suffering and vulnerabilities.

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<sup>18</sup> Further details about the REACH project workshops can be found at <https://www.reach-culture.eu/repository/Deliverables/REACH%20D4.2-Workshops-results-and-lessons-learned.pdf>

The second speaker was Alexandra Bitušíková who described the reaction to the election of a neo-Nazi regional governor in Banská Bystrica in 2013 and the resultant shock and despair that mobilised activist to safeguard the future by trying to make people more tolerant. Populists had used CH for their own purposes, referencing folk law and Christian values to exclude others and divide society. Programmes were implemented in schools to promote human rights, challenge discrimination and support vulnerable groups. Community representatives were invited into schools to provide oral histories to build awareness and share memory.

The end of session discussion considered that resilience has a different meaning in different places. Does it support the status quo e.g. bounce back to what was there before? The two presentations see resilience as empowerment, but leaves the question of who are the gatekeepers/enablers?

How is it possible to link global and cultural changes, given that a conservative concept of resilience is to not change anything? The challenge is to provide an alternative interpretation through the popular media, to maintain important traditions in the face of loss of popular memory, due to new political official lines.

The second session on *Place based heritage* began with Jan Krajíček remembering Iron Curtain heritage, specifically in Aš, located in the north-east of the Czech Republic. His presentation illustrated the resilience of the area as its socio-political environment changed throughout the mid-20th century, with many Czechs expelled. In 1950 the borderline zone was fenced off; life was strictly controlled, people could not stray without armed guards, and traditional festivities were replaced by military festivals. As time has passed, local people are now exploring ways to (re-)use the Iron Curtain Zone, establishing an open museum and a cycle trail. This is unwanted military heritage, but is of interest to local people.



Figure 7: Jan Krajíček presenting Iron Curtain heritage. Photograph: Tim Hammerton

Zdeněk Uherek considered that as some groups no longer live in traditional areas, their history is not remembered by those now living there. Resilience here is the question of remembrance and saving the heritage of one group from another. Places are shaped by many nationalities, histories and periods of domination; in Eastern Europe, both Soviet and western influences have shaped the public areas.



He concluded that, from an anthropological point of view, everyone has their own history and heritage and strives to protect it. Resilience in this case is related to the ability to maintain its own integrity in various environments, the ability to adapt and incorporate its past, present and future into the environment of a changing world. Sometimes it can be a challenge to stability and sometimes a challenge to a dynamic transformation.

Richard Biegel provided an illustrative history of 170 years of the Charles University Institute, charting all of the directors that had been in post in Prague, highlighting continuity and differences. He cited the changes that had taken place over the years and indeed the different regimes such as pre-war, Nazi occupation, communism and post 1989 as well as the social upheavals and institutional discontinuity. In addition to institutional resilience, individuals could have taught during the first half of 20th century or indeed post war until the present day, having to adapt to socio-political regime changes. It is necessary to study and reflect on eras to understand their CH.

In concluding the second session, resilience can be a challenge to both stability and to dynamic transformation. This applies to all areas where preservation is concerned. There is the significant question: can and should everything be preserved?

The third session was entitled *Difficult heritage*, its first presenter was Mirela Tase who introduced what has been labelled as 'unwanted heritage' from the communist era in Tirana, Albania. The "Enver Hoxha" Museum was built as a culmination of the myth of the extinct dictator, although it has come to be known locally as 'the Pyramid'. Although now in decline, it could be preserved with the purpose of reminding people of the past (without honouring it.) People over the age of 60 want it to remain, to be preserved for future generations as a symbol of the communist system. However, younger people want to demolish it, to move on from a difficult past and build for the future. This intense debate has engaged many Tirana citizens.

Natalia Linitskaya described the impact of the arrival of the tractor and automobile plants in Minsk in 1946 that employed 65,000 people and the mass industrialisation of the USSR. There was a need for mass housing, following a socialist method, based upon community sharing, which included: standard layout, areas of greenery, and collectivised services, all promoting the success of socialism. Remembrance of these towns and their statues now generates nostalgia for some people, although others believe that their historical value had been exaggerated, they are ashamed of their Soviet past and prefer to knock buildings down.

The session concluded with a fascinating debate. In the Czech Republic there is also a generational divide, with nostalgia for the 60s-80s generation, that grew up in the same socialist houses. Younger generations do not remember this and just perceive the repressive system. There is still a hatred of communism in the country, as it is linked to Russian influence in Czech politics. A further consideration is that of the army officer Marshal Ivan Konev, who led the liberation of Prague during the Second World War, but also later led the repression of the Budapest Uprising in 1956. There has been fierce debate as to whether his statue should remain in Prague or be removed? (It was removed a month after the workshop took place.)



Should communist era buildings be used as tourist attractions, if they have a difficult history? This could be an issue for local people and lead to resentment. Making money in this way is not ideal. The question is how to show and remember places without making them into theme parks.

There is the issue of focus and the kind of approach used, as well as social and symbolic significance. In Spain, General Franco's grave has recently been moved. There is a debate about what to do with this symbolic place. This is more an issue of significance. Should it be preserved, but without the fascist symbols? Who is visiting? A nostalgic fascist visitor would have a different opinion about the use of the site when compared with someone with a more moderate view. Ultimately, all visitors look for different things in a heritage site.

Keynote speaker Thorsten Ludwig asked, what does heritage interpretation mean today? The goal is to help people to experience in a deeper way, to increase resonance and participation on many different levels. How can heritage be made meaningful for people? Something might be of interest to one person, but not another. Traditionally stories about heritage sites have been about significant figures in history. Today, they are filtered through UNESCO values, to try and make messages interesting for people, by not concentrating on power and achievements, but instead on universalism. Can heritage impact upon the rise in nationalism, Euroscepticism and populism? The importance is therefore about framing the content for heritage sites and the stories that they tell and turning them into learning environments that reflect human values.

The final four presentations of the workshop represented the four REACH participatory pilots. Details of these topics have already been provided in chapter 4.

Workshop host partner CUNI made the following analysis of the presentations:

**Understanding of resilience:** a state/a process/a quality/a capacity/an approach (way of dealing with)

**Subject of resilience:** community, group, minority/city, town, landscape/heritage, memory/values, cohesion/actions, policies, measures, plans

**Resilience adversaries (challenges):** catastrophes/forgetting, decay/misuse, abuse, overuse/extremism, social tensions/change, growth, economic pressures/exploitation, touristification/failure, decline, lacking behind/loss of identity, no sense of place/stasis, stagnation, obsolescence

**Relation to change:** resilience as adaptation to change, control of change, flexibility or even openness to change x resistance, conservatism, stasis

**Relation to conflict:** conflict as part of (community) resilience/avoidance of conflict in building a resilient community/how to work with conflicts? (Resilience as capacity to deal with conflicts in a specific way)



In addition, attendees were asked for feedback at the end of the workshop.

What aspect/example was of particular interest to you?

- I enjoyed a concept of a broad perspective on resilience, which is more open and positive, leading to empowerment of communities
- All aspects of 'resilience', in theory & the multiple meanings and uses in different studies. I also learned a lot from discussions of urban areas, and sites/monuments of previous regimes, and their social significance and changing meanings. Learning about communist monuments in Albania was interesting and led to a good discussion of the significance of Franco's tomb complex in Spain. I'm also coming from a 'heritage' perspective, so all of that was of interest. I very much enjoyed Thorsten's lecture too.

How would you define the concept of resilience within the field of CH?

- A process of and capacity of communities to deal with and adapt to change, and to continue to develop - in relation to CH
- It is the ability of a society to use its CH --traditions, buildings, artefacts, etc.-- as foundation roots to remain strong when facing threats
- I define cultural resilience as the capability of a cultural system (consisting of cultural processes in relevant communities) to absorb adversity, deal with change and continue to develop
- Resilience in terms of "positive resistance" to negative changes, processes and challenges can be very well based on heritage, in other words social participation on heritage can make the community resilient
- The force to stand strong against external factors
- It is the ability to correlate to the needs of a given age taking into the self-historical value.
- I'd say that it includes the idea of preservation of 'archaic' heritage (e.g. tangible and intangible) and enduring sites, landscapes, and traditions coping through challenges and difficulties. This is not necessarily my definition, but these are the areas I think people focus on in particular. I don't think resilience is always a positive thing, if assumed to be 'better' than 'change'.

The workshop was very successful in presenting many different aspects of resilience, but certainly proved that there are many perspectives on the use of the concept and therefore care has to be taken to clarify the concept in future use.

### 5.3 REACH CASES STUDIES OF RESILIENT CULTURAL HERITAGE<sup>19</sup>

In addition to the activities associated with the REACH participatory pilots and workshops, the project team also conducted a mapping exercise to collect best practices in the field of social participation. A focused selection of case studies was then illustrated and discussed in D6.4 - *Resilience and social innovation in cultural heritage* - with the aim of highlighting how resilience and/or social innovation were experienced and tested. It is worth recalling here three practice cases – the self-built Ecovillage in Pescomaggiore; the regeneration of Leicester's cultural quarter; and the restoration and preservation of women's art by the Advancing Women Artists initiative – which speak to the issue of resilience in interesting ways.

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<sup>19</sup> Further details of project case studies can be found at <https://www.reach-culture.eu/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/REACH-D6.4-Resilience-and-social-innovation-in-cultural-heritage-v2.pdf>

### **EVA – Ecovillaggio Autocostruito (Self-Built Ecovillage)**

Located in Pescomaggiore, an area badly affected by the 2009 earthquake, EVA, a self-built, sustainable eco-village, was a community resilience project launched to respond to the need for preserving the socio-cultural heritage of a village at risk of disappearing. It also offered local inhabitants a viable alternative to the unsatisfactory post-earthquake relocation strategy of the Italian government. A grassroots initiative, EVA was funded mainly through private donations. The shock of the earthquake became an opportunity to actively pursue change, instead of accepting a recovery solution that some feared would have implied further depopulation of the area, and loss of identity and sense of belonging. The adaptive capacities of the residents who initiated the EVA project and contributed to the building of the ecovillage were reinforced by the collaborative spirit that inspired the implementation of the project, especially in its initial stages, which saw the involvement of a large group of professionals (architects), residents, volunteers and neighbours. While the project has a strong bottom-up component and can be regarded as a telling example of community resilience sustained by grassroots initiatives, the organisers did run into some difficulties a few years later, as the process of setting up participatory governance mechanisms proved more challenging than expected. In terms of lessons learnt from this experience, two aspects stand out:

- for community resilience to be long-lasting, spontaneous bottom-up initiatives should consider, well ahead of time, formal, institutional and bureaucratic issues that might affect the sustainability of the initiative in the long run;
- it is important to manage, effectively and efficiently, the contribution of volunteers in post-disaster communities; several volunteers flocked to Pescomaggiore, during the building phase, with little or no knowledge of constructing techniques, which put added pressure onto the organisers and slowed down the process of construction.



Figure 8: Pescomaggiore, ecovillaggio. Photograph: Simona Cocola



Building resilience is a delicate process: the EVA experiment leveraged local knowledge, traditions, and intangible heritage to increase the resilience of the local community, but the hurdles encountered in the process of establishing durable forms of self-governance ultimately determined the end of the project in 2014.

### **Leicester's cultural quarter: affective digital histories**

This case study was first presented at the REACH workshop on '*Participatory approaches for creativity and entrepreneurship*' held in Coventry in March 2018. The REACH project team selected this practice as it illustrates how industrial heritage can be preserved and made resilient by being associated with (re-)use, culture-led urban regeneration and the work of creatives. Through fruitful collaborations between academic experts (historians, archivists) and the cultural and creative industries based in Leicester's cultural quarter, a deeper understanding of the multiple histories of this locality was reached, which also served as a springboard for creative interventions involving the local community. Two UK Arts and Humanities Research Council funded projects -- '*The Rise, Fall and Reinvention of Industry*' and '*Affective Digital Histories: Recreating de-Industrialised Places<sup>20</sup>, 1970s – Present*' – contributed to re-connecting urban regeneration with a localised sense of place, recovering the hidden or untold stories of the people who had lived and worked in the St George's area between the late 1970s and the late 1990s. The projects questioned which 'history' forms the dominant narrative and enabled a multiplicity of histories of various subcultures to emerge. As such, through the project, previously marginalised voices and communities (such as the Afro-Caribbean community and the punk community) could contribute to offering their stories and challenging dominant historical narratives of the area. As this example shows, the resilience of cultural heritage is also contingent on innovative approaches to preservation that foreground creative and collaborative (re-)use of heritage resources, including historical knowledge. It is not just a question of adding new chapters to the history of a locality, but of gathering and deploying historical knowledge through collaborative efforts that make that knowledge come alive, strengthening a collective sense of place.

### **Advancing Women's Artists (AWA)**

The resilience of cultural heritage depends to a large extent on decisions made about what counts as heritage, what is considered valuable by institutions, and the cultural and social beliefs that preside over this process of selection. Discriminatory gender practices have contributed to rendering the heritage produced by women far less visible and celebrated than male-centred heritage. As the Advancing Women's Artists project<sup>21</sup> has discovered, museums' storehouses in Florence are not lacking in female-authored artworks, which are rarely, if ever, restored and exhibited for the enjoyment of the public. The resilience of this portion of cultural heritage is imperilled not so much by physical decay but by a form of institutional neglect that stands in contrast with the intellectual interest in the works of women artists increasingly manifested by scholars and academics over the past fifty years or so. The organisers of the AWA initiative have launched a programme of research and restoration of women's artworks hidden away in storage facilities across Tuscany's museums and churches. Working in collaboration with museum directors and experts in restoration, AWA has already brought back to life important figures of pioneering women artists in the Renaissance (Platunilla Nelli, for example) and has encouraged the public to engage with the works of lesser-known women painters, by inviting modern-day artists to respond, in their own creative output, to the visions from the past these paintings formalise, thus sparking creative conversations through the centuries.

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<sup>20</sup> See <http://affectivedigitalhistories.org.uk/apps> Verified 22/6/2020

<sup>21</sup> See <http://advancingwomenartists.org/home-1> Verified 22/6/2020

The activities of AWA help museums to recognise, appreciate and exhibit a segment of cultural heritage that forms an integral part of artistic traditions, even though it has long remained mute and unseen. By increasing the resilience of women's artistic heritage, initiatives such as AWA are also instrumental in promoting a more gender-balanced understanding of heritage.

#### 5.4 RESILIENT CULTURAL HERITAGE IN A TIME OF PANDEMIC

Since March 2020, when the World Health Organisation (WHO) declared Covid-19 a global pandemic, various countries the world over have imposed severe lockdown restrictions, closing non-essential businesses, including museums, heritage institutions, art galleries and cultural venues. Economic indicators foresee that the cultural sector will be one of the most severely affected; its recovery is expected to be slow. Yet, the demand for cultural and creative content has increased considerably during lockdown, and patterns of engagement and participation have changed, with digital consumption taking precedence over physical experiences, and individual engagement replacing the social experience of enjoying art and culture.



Figure 9: Bust of Marcus Aurelius with mask  
(Photograph: Silvana Colella)

In this context of systemic uncertainty, the notion of resilient cultural heritage has acquired new resonance: how will the sector as a whole withstand the many disturbances affecting the livelihood of artists, intermediaries and cultural heritage institutions? One notable phenomenon which merits attention is the immediate reaction of the cultural heritage sector during lockdown: an impressive array of initiatives was launched by individuals and institutions (museums, art galleries, cultural venues) to continue offering cultural content, finding new channels to reach the public and new ways to engage different generations of visitors. The REACH project team has undertaken a mapping exercise to chart some of these activities in various countries in Europe, as illustrated in D6.4 - *Resilience and social innovation in cultural heritage*. Grouped under three subheadings – outreach initiatives; emergency funding for the arts; artists' creative

offerings – these cultural interventions demonstrate the ability of institutions as well as individuals to develop adaptive behaviour and to manage change. While it is impossible *now* to foresee whether these responses will effectively contribute to supporting the resilience of the sector, it is not too early to appreciate the sentiment of solidarity and the collaborative spirit fuelling these initiatives. In a context of increased anxiety, the social value of culture, heritage and the arts has emerged more starkly, alongside their role in fostering individual wellbeing. In the midst of the pandemic, writes Mark Banks (2020), 'we *are* turning to culture...While culture and the arts may not be vital to the preservation of life, they are proving increasingly vital to preserving the sense of life being lived' (2).



However, this realisation is in tension with doubts and fears about the long-term effects of the sanitary crisis on the resilience of the cultural heritage sector. The sheer abundance of digital content, for example, raises questions about sustainability and audience engagement. What will happen to the plethora of digital programmes, launched by museums, if demand for digital content decreases? Will the new digital visitors become on-site visitors post-pandemic? To what extent the measures adopted to cope with Covid-19 are modifying consumption patterns, whether temporarily or durably? The crisis has sharpened the need for cultural institutions and industries to better understand their publics' incentives and expectations (Radermecker 2020). Furthermore, some sub-sectors within the broadly defined cultural sphere can hardly operate without a minimum audience in situ: for the performing arts complying with social distancing measures (limited seating capacity) can lead to income loss and cost inefficiency (Radermecker 2020). Without sustained financial and logistical support, theatres or concert venues are bound to face a very uncertain future.

Similarly, the resilience of self-employed artists and creatives, whose work is no longer in demand, as exhibitions, festivals, and public events are on hold depends not just on their adaptive capacity, but on the political will to invest in their future, as Françoise Benhamou and Victor Ginsburgh (2020) have recently argued. They propose a 'new deal' based on the idea of investing in the lower end of the pyramid, supporting artists, authors, intermediaries, and creatives whose work is crucial for the recovery of the whole sector: "Aider en priorité les artistes, auteurs et créateurs ainsi que les structures les plus fragiles, ceux et celles dont la voix ne se fait pas toujours entendre. Tels devraient être les deux impératifs qui guident les choix publics en ce moment inédit." (Benhamou- Ginsburgh 2020). Most countries in Europe have taken important steps to provide much needed financial relief to cultural workers, in the form of grants, loans, liquidity aids, and fiscal leniency measures,<sup>[1]</sup> which goes to show that it takes a communal effort, and the recognition of interdependencies, to help individuals become resilient.

## 5.5 RESILIENCE RESPONSE TO POST-COVID-19 TOURISM

A further CH sector affected by the Covid-19 pandemic has been tourism, however, its arrival has had both positive and negative effects for local people and businesses. In the course of the REACH Small towns' pilot, several cases were identified where over touristification had begun to overwhelm towns and had a negative impact on the place itself, the lives of local residents and the environment. This is also the case for well-known European cities, with two, Prague and Budapest, the locations of REACH partners.

Over-tourism is defined as "the excessive growth of visitors leading to overcrowding in areas where residents suffer the consequences, which have enforced permanent changes to their lifestyles, access to amenities and general wellbeing' (Cheer, Milano and Novelli 2019).<sup>22</sup> This sums up the reality of many European cities that have reaped the rewards – but also borne the brunt – of the explosion in cheap flights and Airbnb-style accommodation that recent years have brought.

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<sup>22</sup> <https://theconversation.com/overtourism-a-growing-global-problem-100029>

In 2019 Pavel Čížinský, Mayor of Prague 1, encouraged tourists to visit more peripheral areas instead of over-visited attractions such as Charles Bridge and the historic ninth-century castle. The centre of Prague “is losing the quality of normal life. The centre is becoming a goldmine where you earn a lot of money, but it is not a place for living. It is a significant and crucial problem.”<sup>23</sup>



Figure 10: Tourists crossing Charles Bridge, Prague. Photograph: Tim Hammerton

However, Shaun Walker’s Guardian article (2020) noted that the Covid-19 pandemic has significantly reduced the level of tourism in 2020. “The residents have been complaining for a very long time that the city doesn’t belong to them anymore,” said Barbora Hrubá of Prague City Tourism, a municipal body that works on the Czech capital’s tourism strategy. “This is a great opportunity for us to rebuild and restart tourism in the city differently. We want a different type of visitor who visits more than the most famous monuments in the centre.”

In Budapest, officials are having similar thoughts. “Like in so many other big European tourist destinations, people have been getting exhausted by the scale of tourism,” said the city’s mayor, Gergely Karácsony, during the initial 2020 lockdown. “We want to spread out the spots in the city that are touristically interesting, and change the type of people who come. It shouldn’t only be bachelor parties and booze – we want to rebrand ourselves a bit,” he said.

The pandemic has provided the kind of opportunity for a rethink that would have been much more difficult when the usual flows of visitors were still arriving. “I really hope that Budapest can build up a new face of tourism when this is over. Sometimes we surrendered to tourists, with local interests pushed back, and it definitely isn’t sustainable,” said Gábor Manek, who owns a number of restaurants and bars in Budapest and runs an electronic music festival. However, he also estimated, following conversations with fellow owners after two months of the pandemic, that between 25% to 30% of bars and restaurants will not reopen, as many were only profitable due to the custom of passing tourists.

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<sup>23</sup> Both Cheer, Milano and Novelli definition and Čížinský quotation paragraphs have been taken from the Robert Tait article in the Observer, 25 August 2019:  
<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/aug/25/prague-drunk-tourists-conquer-our-city>



The hope is that by taking some time to rethink tourism strategies with the locals at the forefront, the cities will also become more satisfying destinations for tourists. “When the locals are happy, the visitors will be as well,” said Hrubá.<sup>24</sup>

When writing about another overcrowded city, Venice, Neal E Robbins (2020) suggests that “Tourism after coronavirus requires a new mindset. Maybe we can’t visit places so casually; maybe we will need to sacrifice the freedom to drop in at any time and go anywhere as fast as we can or by whatever means suits us. We need to accept life – and visiting – at a slower pace.

Beyond that we need to end our passivity as tourists and see destinations as people’s homes, not just attractions. We should acquaint ourselves with local conditions and be ready to refrain from travelling if authorities listen only to monied interests and fail to foster local livelihoods and protect the local environment. Greener attitudes will help fragile destinations to live on – and allow masterpieces such as Venice to survive for generations to come.”<sup>25</sup>

Prioritisation of economics over the wellbeing of people and preservation of their towns and cities has put their lifestyles and sustainability at risk. Although there are severe financial implications for tourism related businesses, the Covid-19 pandemic has provided a pause and an opportunity for further adaptation and the development of alternative economic models. As with the wider CH sector, time will reveal the resilience of European tourism and how it bounces on from this period of disturbance.

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<sup>24</sup> Paragraphs featuring quotes from Hrubá, Karácsony and Manek have been taken from the Shaun Walker article in the Guardian, 20 May 2020: <https://www.theguardian.com/travel/2020/may/30/glad-youre-not-here-stag-party-capitals-vow-to-do-tourism-differently?>

<sup>25</sup> Neal E Robbins article in the Guardian, 19 June 2020: <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2020/jun/19/venice-tourism-covid-19-coronavirus-green-tourism>



## 6 RECOMMENDATIONS

Following analysis of previous chapters, a series of policy and practice recommendations have been developed based on the *REACH findings on Resilient European Cultural Heritage*.

1. Resilience understood as the management of change requires that cultural heritage organisations, local authorities and local communities acquire adaptive capabilities to respond to uncertainty.
2. Capacity building is required in the form of new economic models, with disruption (caused by the Covid-19 pandemic) used to reassess approaches and policies.
3. Critical Infrastructures are integral to resilience building and require development frameworks that are inclusive and user-focused.
4. Collaborative working and co-governance structures, including conflict resolution strategies, are necessary to enable meaningful participation.
5. Diversity and minorities policies and practices need to be inclusive to raise awareness and provide guidelines to address inequalities.
6. Diversity and gender policies and practices need to both address inequalities and also recognise the historic contribution that women have made to cultural heritage, as well as encourage further empowerment.
7. The shift from a focus on 'risk' to a focus on 'resilience' calls for new heritage management strategies that embrace change and new models of preservation which focus on processes of adaptation – for example, practices of adaptive (re-)use and of rewilding.
8. An integrated approach to resilience and sustainability that proposes a thinking of resilience beyond the immediacy of crisis.
9. A thinking of resilience beyond standardisation models/practices, to a thinking that is more attuned to the specificity of a site/context and to the needs of the local communities. A thinking that is informed by best practices but is flexible in its application. A thinking that is early in its intervention and that is non-invasive. A thinking that sets parameters, but does not stifle the creativity and potential for adaptation.
10. Connections need to be built between individuals and groups facing similar challenges, to enable (interdisciplinary) knowledge exchange and strengthen communities' voices.
11. Support and training can enable communities to initially develop capacity to contribute, and subsequently autonomy to be able to influence economic, social, cultural, territorial and environmental policy decision making.
12. Promotion of intergenerational activities are needed to pass on and protect memory, traditional skills and knowledge that are in danger of being lost
13. Promotion of community led cultural tourism, creative industries, performing arts and storytelling, to enable greater cultural visibility and awareness, that is based on authentic local knowledge and shared values, to stimulate interest and make cultural heritage relevant.
14. Public consultation is needed to debate approaches to unwanted heritage buildings and monuments, as well as to new heritage developments; public involvement in both short- and longer-term decision making provides empowerment and enhances social cohesion.



15. Redefine the roles of public GLAM institutions<sup>26</sup>, to enable museums to become accessible hubs for communities' cultural engagement and spaces of debate, inspiration, collaboration and exchange.
16. Recognise the importance of tangible and intangible heritage, and community identity, as decisions based solely on economic factors could cause them to be lost.
17. Following periods of societal and institutional discontinuity and adaptation to new regimes, policies and practices, generate initiatives to protect memory and forgotten heritage of former communities and residents.
18. Education and training initiatives should be interpreted in their widest forms, including investment to develop research networks and dissemination activities, and informal community activities, including workshops, demonstrations, arts, dance, language and performance, as well as fora for knowledge exchange to create a more equal relationship in mutual learning and discovery between stakeholders than purely top-down educative approaches
19. A person centric approach is needed to resilient cultural heritage, which may be enhanced, but not defined or restricted, by the use of technologies and social media.
20. As CH participatory activities are often overlooked, but have intrinsic, economic and societal benefits, policies and practices are needed to promote them as an asset rather than a liability, and as an investment rather than a cost.

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<sup>26</sup> GLAM - Galleries, Libraries, Archives and Museums. This process is already happening within the framework of ICOM's new self-critiquing definition, (pre-Covid-19) and discussed in detail in D5.3 – *Institutional heritage pilot results*.



## 7 CONCLUSION

In current cultural heritage discourses, scholars operate with complex definitions of cultural heritage, relativising the role of authenticity and questioning the notion of identity. In these new narratives, heritage is permanently re-created and identities are preserved through change. Some authors stress the role of cultural heritage in enhancing cultural resilience with the strengthening of values such as a sense of place and belonging supporting people's collective identity and self-esteem. Others, who foresee the boundedness of heritage in time and space, argue that 'heritage and its manufacture may wane or change as new social and cultural conditions unfold in the future' (Holtorf 2018: 647). While scientific papers and policy reports tend to adduce resilience as a tool for disaster risk reduction and for mitigation strategies (very often referring to the preservation of archaeological or architectural heritage), the REACH project acknowledges that vulnerability is a precondition of existence, while looking to a future that is always already understood as uncertain. In this context, the project team researched examples of flexibility and adaptive changes, in the field of social participation in heritage preservation, (re-)use and management. Similarly, to the definition of Ghahramani et al. (2020), the project understood 'community resilience' as 'an ability to anticipate, learn from, and cope with past perturbations, while integrating this knowledge to reduce vulnerability to future risks and lessen the likelihood of disaster. This requires a community to draw upon social connections, capacity, resources, and natural or built capital to rebound ('or bounce back') from and reduce future risks' (Ghahramani et al. 2020: 2266).

In the line of reasoning articulated in the latest conceptual innovations of heritage discourse, CH appears as a constantly changing variable. Communities are becoming increasingly aware that they, too, may be responsible or leaders for change. Thus, it means that resilience can be understood as the management of change, according to an approach coming from *within*, from the communities themselves. The preservation, (re-)use and management of their potentials, in this case CH, is key in the process whereby communities face unpredictable, uncontrollable and uncertain global and local trends. This implies that numerous effective strategies and methods emerge from individual cases, so much so that it is difficult to derive a general model. What one can do, however, as the REACH project sought to do throughout its three years lifetime, is to gather participatory methods and good practices from which either communities or professionals can draw ideas to strengthen their own community's resilience and preserve, (re-)use and manage their CH.

This deliverable has therefore presented the findings of the REACH project as regards the resilience of European CH. The concept and the practice of resilience have both been tested, in a variety of different contexts. Initially, the project team developed a conceptual framework, looking at the intellectual history of the notion of resilience, and its transition from the fields of engineering and environmental sciences to the social sciences and humanities remit. The framework identified three pillars – milieu, resilience and participation – which form the basis of the REACH project's understanding of cultural heritage, and placed emphasis on the role of communities in building the resilience of heritage and the role of heritage in strengthening the resilience of communities. There were other occasions to discuss resilience with a wide range of stakeholders: the Budapest conference and the Prague workshop were crucial moments of consultation that allowed the REACH team to gain further insights into perspectives on resilience, approached from multiple angles.



This work was in constant dialogue with the parallel activities organised within the framework of the four REACH participatory pilots. Each pilot assessed resilience in relation to the specific context in which its activities were embedded. While resilience can hardly be measured in the absence of exact indicators, it is nonetheless possible to identify factors that facilitate the resilience of communities and cultural heritage. These factors are:

- Minority (Roma) heritage: the existence or creation of protective social networks and interconnections among cultural institutions, actors, stakeholders; fostering individual abilities and skills, especially concerning bi-culturalism, via formal and informal education; participatory activities, involving communities in every phase of the process.
- Rural heritage: improving local engagement and public participation, empowering local communities; implementation of co-governance initiatives to strengthen the capacity to face current challenges; promote alternative economic or business models (circular, sustainable economy nourished by local knowledge and practices); relevance of adaptive management.
- Institutional heritage: capacity to adapt to the needs of diversified publics, by developing new approaches to participation; a focus on inclusivity, involving non-professional volunteers and re-interpreting heritage in relation to new publics; a focus on dialogue as a new form of cultural education; flexibility in the administration.
- Small towns' heritage: effective forms of communication between institutions and residents; a broader conception of local heritage, including intangible aspects; ability to engage the attention and participation of young people; develop local-based tourism branding.

These very different communities demonstrated different methods and good practices in order to establish resilient cultural heritage practices and social cohesion. In the different approaches and understandings of the societal significance of cultural heritage, the concepts of resilience and resilient cultural heritage/communities seem to be crucial.

Resilience can be viewed as a process of becoming: adapting to uncertainty or managing change (the core of resilience, according to the REACH approach) is not achieved once and for all, as disruptions may always lurk in the background. Learning how to deal with them is key. In this respect, the REACH repository of good practices<sup>27</sup> complements the pilot experiences and analyses by providing a useful archive of case studies which combine, in different forms and degrees, an emphasis on resilience and/or participation, in relation to preservation, management and (re-)use of cultural heritage. No generalised model of resilience can be derived from these case studies, but the vast majority of them suggest that bottom-up initiatives and the involvement of local communities are essential ingredients in any process of becoming resilient, whether the subject is cultural heritage at risk of disappearing or people facing adversities.

One dramatic example of the latter is the Covid-19 pandemic, still ongoing at the time of writing. Culture has certainly proven its social worth during lockdown: heritage institutions have been proactive in multiplying their efforts to reach out to citizens in a moment of crisis. The drastic decrease in tourism flows, while detrimental to many businesses, has incentivised municipalities to reconsider the sustainability of economic models overdependent on tourism.

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<sup>27</sup> See <https://www.open-heritage.eu/best-practices> and <https://www.reach-culture.eu/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/REACH-D6.2-Good-practices-of-social-participation-in-cultural-heritage.pdf>



The current sanitary crisis has thrown into stark relief the limitations of resilience understood as a regulatory ideal, a quality that the individual *qua* individual is supposed to cultivate, while structural inequalities remain unchanged. Without financial and logistical support from central governments and states, the recovery of many sectors, including the cultural heritage one, will be slow and painful.

Resilience has been an important concept that has been discussed throughout the REACH project. Partners have considered its meanings and ways in which it can be used, discussing them with external stakeholders to share this understanding. This deliverable has described that process and therefore makes a valuable contribution to the evolving discourse.



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