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Euromed Heritage
التراث الأوروبي المتوسطي

Two EU regional projects team up for sustainable tourism development CIUDAD and EH4 together to induce urban heritage protection

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Last 5 and 6 December, Euromed Heritage (EH) joined [CIUDAD](#) in its Thematic Networking Event – Cultural Heritage & Sustainable Tourism, which was organised in the [World Heritage city of Byblos](#), in Lebanon. The event involved two CIUDAD grant projects working on cultural heritage issues in link with tourism development, in the cities of Ungheni (Moldova), Kutaisi (Georgia), Bing Jbeil (Lebanon), Haut Chouf (Lebanon), Zgharta (Lebanon), Hermel (Lebanon) and Jerash (Jordan).

The open space meetings brought forth discussions about the use of cultural heritage for sustainable tourism development with a view to instil urban regeneration and induce urban heritage protection in cities involved in CIUDAD. The scope of work of CIUDAD in the field of tourism stems from a perspective of urban regeneration and economic development with much infrastructure works, training of municipal cadres, and investments in the cities. The participation of Euromed Heritage, in the person of the Project Manager of the Regional Monitoring and Support Unit (RMSU) for the programme, Georges Zouain, and representatives of two projects, Mutual Heritage and Mare Nostrum, contributed the patrimonial dimension in tourism development and the vast experience accumulated within Euromed Heritage in this regard, and put new focus on the intangible dimension of heritage. Both programme perspectives converged on the need to establish best practices in order to secure sustainable development and ensure the integrity of the heritage resources in question.

EH participation drew attention to the need to focus on heritage as an important component in tourism development and the implications it entails in order to avoid abuse and overuse; it also underlined the need for a participative approach, which is essential if successes are to be scored at the level of communities. Finally, it laid grounds for future cooperation on the subject. This cooperation needs yet to be drawn out within the two programmes, but it can be assumed that it should involve primarily the sharing of tools developed within EH towards the proper management of heritage sites/cities/ complexes pertaining to CIUDAD, and the exchange of expertise from within the RMSU team as well as from the pool of experts within the EH projects and the EH network.

EH participation to this event was an example of cooperation between two important regional programmes funded by the EU. By the valorisation of cultural heritage, EH programme supports the dialogue between cultures throughout the Mediterranean region and the current 2008-2012 phase, creates new opportunities for people's awareness and appropriation of their extraordinary common cultural heritage. CIUDAD programme aims to help local governments within the European Neighbourhood Policy Instrument (ENPI) region enhance their capacity to plan for sustainable, integrated and long-term urban development using good governance principles.

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