

The European Union's IPA Cross-Border programme IPA programme Greece-Albania 2007-2013
For "Albania"

FINAL REPORT

on

NETCASTLE Project for ALBANIA

Progress and Assessment



This project is funded
by The European Union



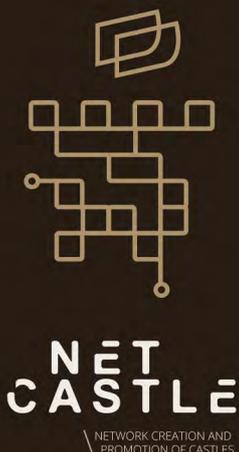
A project implemented by
UET Centre and Institution of Prefekt in Gjirokastra

FINAL REPORT
on
NET CASTLE Project
Progress and Assessment



Prepared by: Prof. As. Dr. Ylljet Alicka

Tirana, July 2016



1. Introduction - Overall objective of the Net-Castle project

In the framework of the Operational Program for Cross-Border Cooperation IPS between Greece and Albania, during 2007 – 2013, the implementation of “NET-CASTLE”, listed in Priority 2.1 and Priority 2.2, achieved its main goal: the development of the cultural tourism. As a result of this project, we have now the digitalization of ten castles in Ionian Islands and the Epirus Region (five in the Corfu Island and five in Thesprotia), as well as twelve castles in the Prefecture of Gjirokastra.

Referring to:

- experience and cooperation for cross-border programs between Greece and Albania;
- exploring ideas and other ways for highlighting and promoting the cultural heritage of both countries;
- proper use of structures raised for this purpose;
- knowledge gained and lessons learned to increase this cooperation at a higher level; and
- use of new technologies and e-tourism

we are able to underline that the NET-CASTLE project fulfilled its overall objective, contributing to the strengthening of tourism in order to develop the cross-border economic ties for the areas covered by the project. Through the promotion of castles in these areas, highlighting and conveying a common cultural product aiming at strengthening the tourist industry, the product of this project further promotes the cultural collaboration and solidarity between both countries.

Promoting the common cultural elements beyond borders and drawing attention in these cultural crossroads were made possible thanks to the use of the new technologies - as a platform conveying the historic and cultural values of the areas by means of creating a network for observing, renovating and improving the cultural heritage of the castles in the aforementioned regions, having a direct impact in promoting the tourism industry in these areas and offering a journey in time and space, in 3D format.

Through the project in question, Albanian – Greek collaboration, exchange of common experiences, commitment of public authorities and population, putting into use a working method and a joint conceptual framework, are some of the factors that motivated the this project contributors to get engaged in order to demonstrate the European ancient roots of these regions. This also proves that the castles of these areas do not belong only to the Albanian and Greek cultural heritage, but also to the European and world heritage i.e. creating a global vision of these areas, so they could find their deserved place in the European conscience.

Realized as a result of joint efforts from both countries, the NET- CASTLE project will lead to the development of tourism in the region, cultural renovation of tourism (e-tourism), differentiation of castles from other antique monuments, raising the awareness and mobilization of local scientific community, empowering and synchronization of informative methods for all residents and visitors to these areas, through the use of new technologies; therefore this project is also a great contribution to the cultural education of young people. Thanks to the new technologies, this project has also contributed to the expansion of the tourist geographical and the interconnection of the new destinations.

In general, the project has achieved the following:

- Promoting cross-border cooperation for the development of tourism in these areas;
- Modernizing tourist services and strengthening cultural tourism through what is called e-tourism, separating the characteristics of castles from those of ancient monuments;
- Raising awareness and motivating the local scientific community;
- Strengthening and modernizing the informative methods for all the citizens and the visitors through the use of new technologies;
- Creating opportunities for cultural education of young people.

2. NET-CASTLE project - implementation of government policies and strategies for the development and promotion of cultural heritage and tourism

The idea, preparation and implementation of the NET-CASTLE project were made in accordance with the strategy and program of the Albanian Government, which are related to the cultural heritage and tourism development (2013 - 2017).

The idea, preparation and implementation of this project clearly reflect the objective of the Albanian Government and the Ministry of Culture in favor of “*a long-term vision of development*”, serving as a cross-border hub, contributing not only to the cultural heritage, but also to the promotion of tourism – one of the main industries nowadays. In this context, the cultural heritage assists to a great extent to the tourism industry, having thus a symbiotic relationship.

More specifically, the implementation of the NET-CASTLE project fulfills one of the main priorities of the government program, as follows:

- *“Today, more than ever, the cultural heritage needs a long-term vision of development. It is an imperative to immediately conduct a detailed and physical diagnosis of the current state of the cultural heritage in the entire territory.”*
- *“Preparation and the regular and rigorous updating of the listing and verification of status for the already-declared monuments and those proposed to be removed from the listing.”*
- *“In cooperation with international donors, there will be projects focused on the public – private partnership, aiming at the revitalization of the cultural heritage, by ensuring transparency, monitoring, protection and restoration.”*
- *“The Albanian tourism has a great opportunity and more competitive chances if it were developed as a cultural tourism. Cultural tourism should be one of the main aspects of the Albanian tourism in general.”*

At the same time, the NET- CASTLE project fulfilled one of the main priorities, within the vision of the Ministry of Culture Strategy related to the cultural heritage (strategic document, points 4 and 5), where it is clearly emphasized that:

“ . . . preparing a risk map for all the specific monuments, but also for the historic centers and archeological parks . . . , ensuring thus a long-term and sustainable development program, which defines the opportunities for extending the projects in new dimensions . . . ”

In the case of the NET-CASTLE project, the historical monuments of the selected areas, i.e. the castles – part of the project, enjoy the status of the first-category cultural monuments, defined as *“Heritage with national values”* or *“Historical Ensemble”* i.e. *a set of urban-architectural values of historical importance for the nation.*

3. The achievement of specific objectives and concrete results of the NET-CASTLE project

In more concrete terms and referring to the overall objective (*setting up a network for the promoting and indicating the cultural heritage of the historical castles and selected areas*), the NET-CASTLE project offers to the virtual users a different experience, which might be cultural and educational; this will be achieved through suitable, interactive, innovative services, a tour in space and time of the historical monuments reflections through 3D illustrations of historical monuments.

Thanks to previous experiences in setting up joint tourist packages, the collaboration of the countries in the region – between Albania and Montenegro, Albania and Greece (Corfu – Butrint), the project offers to a number of tourist companies on both sides of the border proper data and necessary information to include in their tourist packages visits to the castles and historical monuments of the area covered by this project. (It is worth mentioning that in its recent report, the well-known international agency “Skyscanner” has included Albania and specifically its tourist-cultural sites as the five main destinations of the tourism of the year 2016, with a clear tendency to increase the number of tourists by 10 %).

In general, we can conclude that the project fulfills the objectives set out at the initial phase of the project. The following are the main objectives:

- ✓ Detailed identification of the cultural heritage of the area, making the distinction of the castles to other classical monuments of antiquity;
- ✓ Digitization of selected information about the historical monuments of the area;
- ✓ Development for applications within the virtual description of the time span through 3D representations of historical monuments;
- ✓ Growth of tourism in the region;
- ✓ Improvement of the tourist services bringing about a higher level of tourism (e-tourism);
- ✓ Strengthening and synchronizing the informative methods for all residents and visitors through the use of new technologies;
- ✓ Cultural education of young people; and
- ✓ Improving the cooperation between the two countries and addressing time and again any common problem which may come up.

4. Progress of the NET-CASTLE project and its implementation phases

Launched in July 2014, the NET-CASTLE project (under IPA CBC “Greece-Albania program”, with the support of the European Union, implemented by UET Centre, in collaboration with the Prefecture of Gjirokastra and the Ionian Islands Region / Regional Unit of Corfu, and the region of Epirus / Regional Unit of Thesprotia), conducted in 2016 its final phase, trying to follow rigorous stages based on the relevant stock packages.

We would like to note that the dynamics of the project implementation has not been homogeneous - mainly for objective reasons, such as the lack of collaboration from the Leading Partner in Gjirokastra (Institution of Prefect), due to the elections for local government in 2015; as a result, the work in region of Gjirokastra was suspended for a relatively long period of time.

Stages of NET-CASTLE project implementation under 5 Work Packages that were programmed beforehand

Based on the division of work carried out for the project, according to five main packages, NET-CASTLE project results are as follows:

Work Package 1 – WP1 - Coordination and Management

This work package ensures an effective implementation of the project activities and the development of an efficient monitoring and coordination system. The actions included in WP1 are the following:

- Administrative and financial supervision, evaluation and preparation of reports on the continuity of implementation and its financial operations.
- Organizing meetings of Project Management Group, as well as networking meetings, in order to ensure an active participation of all partners in the project activities and evaluation of the performance of its activities.
- Certification of expenses.

During this phase:

- It was conducted an administrative and financial supervision of activities;
- It was prepared the evaluation of reports on the implementation continuity and the financial activities of the project;
- Three working meeting took place. More specifically, during this period were organized regular meetings of the Project Management Group as well as networking meetings, with an active participation of all partners in the project activities, during which the evaluation of the implementation phases of the project was carried out. A total of three management meetings were conducted: in Corfu, in Gjirokastra and in Tirana, and the final conference was also held - according to the following schedule:

a. Initial Meeting of the Project | Corfu | 07/11/2014

The initial meeting of the NET-CASTLE project was organized by the leading partner, Ionian Islands Prefecture / Regional Unit of Corfu (LP1), in November 7, 2014. The meeting was held at the offices of LP1, where the partners discussed the situation to date and set up an agenda for the project activities, according to the respective plan.

During the following year, two more meetings took place; their purpose was a direct and a more effective communication among the partners of the project, as well as the achievement of a better coordination and planning for future activities.

b. Second Technical Meeting of the Project | Gjirokastra | 16/05/2016

Following the implementation of the NET-CASTLE project, the Prefecture of Gjirokastra organized the Second Management Meeting with all the project partners, in May 16, 2016. The meeting took place at “Çajupi” Hotel in Gjirokastra. During this meeting, the participants gave clear instructions and recommendations for the project implementation; they also had talks about the acceleration of the implementation for project activities.

c. Third Technical Meeting of the Project | Tirana | 15/06/2016

The Third Management Meeting of the NET-CASTLE Project was organized by UET Center in June 15, 2016, at the premises of the European University of Tirana, Tirana. During this meeting, the project partners reported on the implementation of the platform for promoting the castles, digitization of selected information about the historical monuments of the area and developing application of virtual descriptions within the time span through 3D representations of historical monuments.

d. In July, 2016, the final conference will be held in Tirana, as described in the invitation with the following agenda:



AGENDA

11:30 – 12:00	Registration
12:00 – 12:10	Welcome Speech <i>Mr. Blerjana Bino, Executive Director of UET Centre</i>
12:10 – 12:30	NETCASTLE and the importance of the project <i>Ms. Koula Kiriaki, Project Manager, Lead partner</i>
12:30 – 13:30	Panelists Mr. Melsi Labi, Director of National Historical Museum in Tirana Dr. Shpend Bengu, Lecturer at Communication and Design Department Representative from Ministry of Culture, Albania Representative from Cultural Museum of Gjirokaster
13:30 – 13:45	Interreg IPA CBC capitalization exercise: main findings and recommendations for environment, natural and cultural development and opportunities <i>Mr. Papadopoulos Giorgos, Coordinator of JTS, Thessaloniki</i>
13:45 – 14:15	Report 'Communication Policy on cultural heritage' <i>Prof. Ylljet Alicka, Expert on Cultural Issues</i>
14:15 – 14:30	Implementation of NetCastle project in Regional Unit of Thesprotia, <i>Mr. Sotiris Serdenis, External Expert</i>
14:30 - 14:45	NetCastle – Digitalization of Castles, challenges and lesson learned from the expert team. Virtual tour presented <i>Mr. Perparim Ndoi and Ms. Kebjana Haka</i>
14:45 – 15:00	Discussion with the audience
15:00 – 16:00	Lunch + networking session

The Project is co-funded by the European Union and by National Funds of Greece & Albania under the IPA Cross-Border PROGRAMME "Greece - Albania 2007-2013"



WorkPackage 2 – WP 2 - Information and Publicity

The second work package includes actions, aiming at the wide dissemination of the project's outputs and results to a variety of target groups and stakeholders, such as the local population, unemployed, graduates, SMEs, public authorities, etc., in order to raise their awareness in relation to the work progress for the promotion of the cultural heritage.

The actions included in WP2 are the following:

- 2.1 Preparing a publicity plan
- 2.2 Creating a project website
- 2.3 Developing a multilingual publicity package
- 2.4 Dissemination of results to the media and general public
- 2.5 Final conference

Pursuant to the point 2.1, in February 2015, was prepared the Communication Strategy Plan, referring to the Information and Publicity Manual of the European Commission.

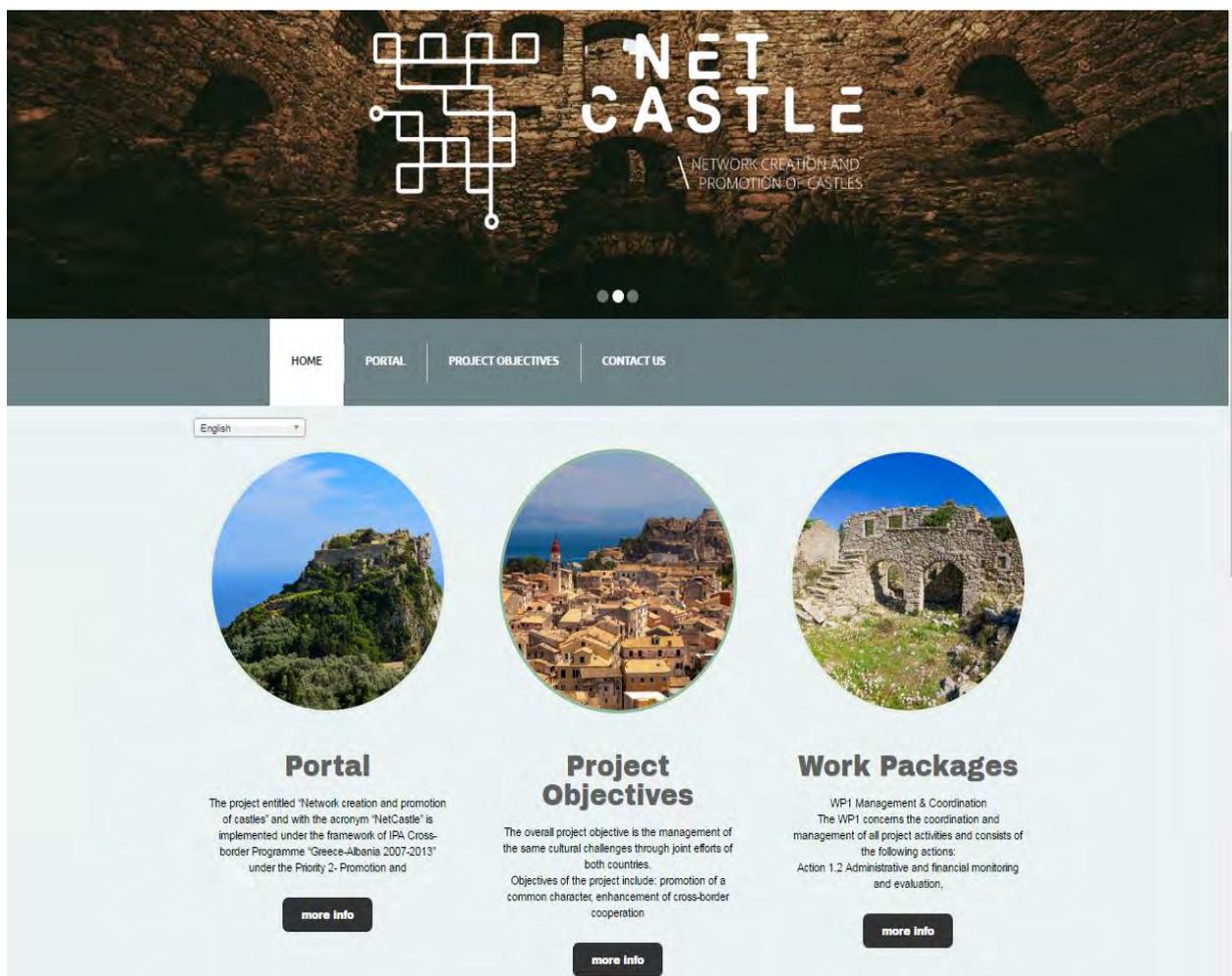
Communication Strategy Plan included:

1. Introduction
2. Guidance on General Communication - Strategy
3. Communication activities
4. Performance Indicators

ANNEXES

The internet page of the project, in Albanian English, and Greek, was set up, and it can be accessed in the address: <http://www.netcastle.eu/>

The following is the visual appearance of the front page of the website



The portal (photo of front page of the website)

a. The project (brief description – the objective)

The project titled “Creating the Network and Promoting Castles” and the acronym “Net–Castles” (“Net-Casltēs' eng.) is materialized in the framework of Territorial Cooperation Program between Greece and Albania, 2007 – 2013, and is listed in the Priority 2, which is co-financed by the European Union. The leading partner is the Ionian Islands Prefecture / Regional Unit of Corfu.

Partner regions attract many tourists thanks to their historical monuments. Cultural heritage includes many castles, which were built in different historical periods. This rich cultural heritage may amount to a tool for regional cooperation, relationship and harmonization. Also, promoting the historical heritage, by having a focus on young people

and tourists, contributes to a wider spread of experiences verbally, but at the same time serves to expand the regional culture, even beyond the territory covered by the program. As a result, the increasing use of the new technologies, especially the Internet, has positively contributed to the expansion of the tourist geographical area and connections to new destinations.

The project focused on promoting and highlighting a common cultural product in the cross-border area, in order to strengthen the tourism industry, by means of using new technologies and e-tourism. Making use of new technologies is considered the driving force for the implementation of the project, which shall transform the area into a tourist attraction, but will also effectively disseminate the history and culture of the region. Specifically, the project aims to create a network to promote and highlight the cultural heritage of historic castles and targeted areas.

The project was prepared to provide the users a diverse cultural and educational experience through appropriate services, which are suitable, interactive and innovative for this purpose. The project will provide the opportunity for descriptions within the time span through 3D illustrations of historical monuments.

b) Partners

LP - Πεπιθέπεια Ιονίων Νήζων /
Πεπιθεπειακή Ενόηηηα Κέπκςπαρ
Σαμάπα 13, TK 49100, Κέπκςπαρ
Τηλ: +30 26613 61536
Φαξ: +30 26610 32525
Website: www.pin.gov.gr
E-mail: k.kiriaki@pin.gov.gr



LP2 –Institution of Gjirokastra Prefect
Sheshi" Çerçiz Topulli" Gjirokastër, Albania
Tel: +355 84 26 3435
Fax: +355 84 26 3434
E-mail: ariank1971@gmail.com
prefekti_gjirokaster@yahoo.com



P3 - Πεπιθέπεια Ηπέιπος / Πεπιθεπειακή

Ενόηηηα Θεζπω ήίαρ

Παναγή Τζαλδάπη 18 -Διοικηηήπιο,

ΤΚ 46100, Ηγος μενήςζα

Τηλ: +30 26650 99867

Φαξ: +30 26650 25032

Website: www.thesprotia.gr

Email: th.logothetis@php.gov.gr



Region of Epirus
Regional Unit of Thesprotia

P4 - UET Centre

Blv. "Gjergj Fishta", Nd 70, H1, Tirana, 1023

Τηλ: +355 6070012

Website: www.uetcentre.org

Email: ketrina.cabiri@uet.edu.al



Programs links:

<http://www.interreg.gr/en/>

<http://www.greece-albania.eu/>

Covered areas:

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Corfu>

http://el.wikipedia.org/wiki/Νομός_Θεζπω_ήιαρ

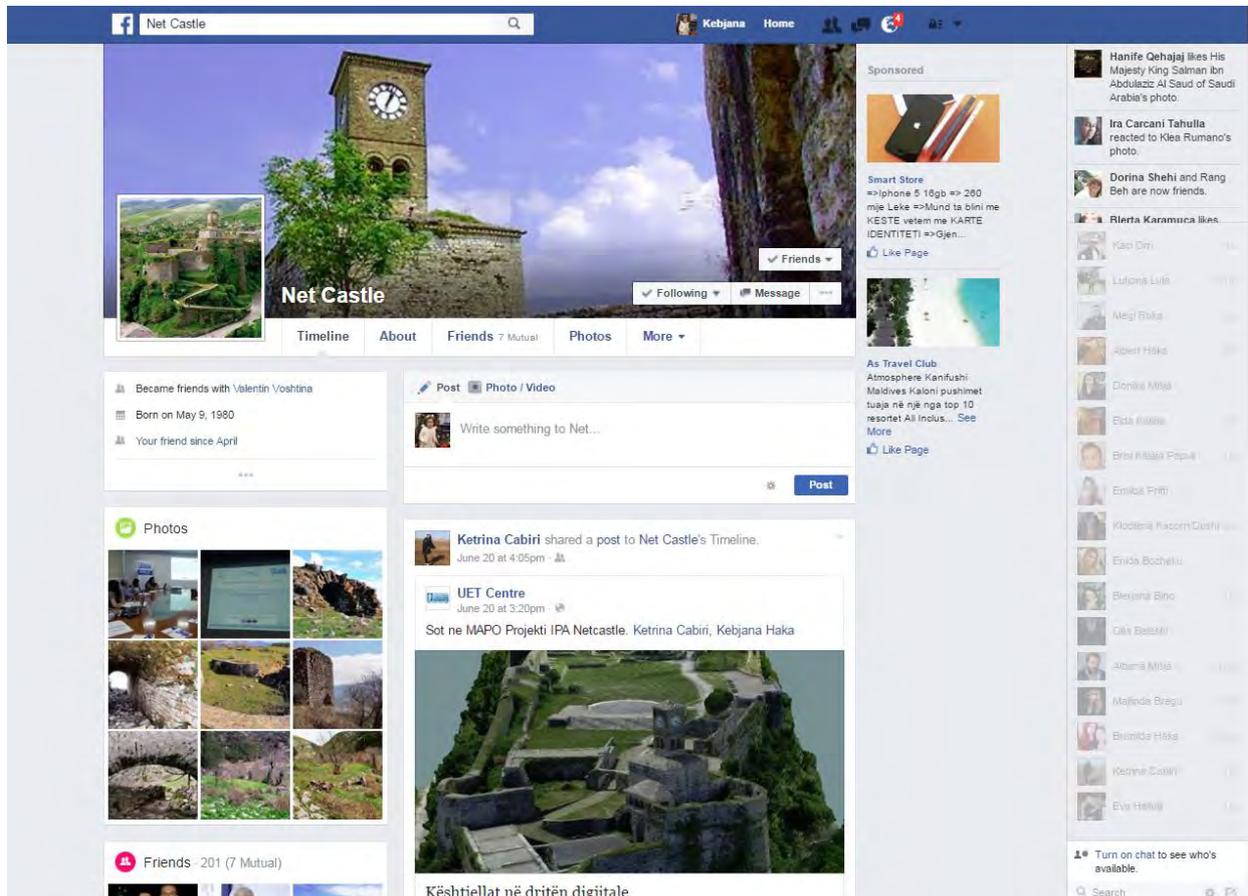
<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gjirokastër>

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tirana>

Preparation of a multilingual communication package includes a leaflet, the project logo and other informative materials, such as a brochure, a banner and CDs.

In the framework of this work package for the project, a profile in the social network Facebook was also set, which can be found in the following address:

<https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100011678966557&fref=ts>



To fulfill the obligations arising from paragraph 4 of the Second Work Package (WP2), activities related to the distribution and dissemination of the results to inform and sensitize citizens on the promotion and progress of the cultural heritage of these areas were realized.¹

Within the framework of the project, a communication strategy was prepared; this was meant to be carried out at two levels:

Internal communication within three target groups:

- ✓ Project Partners;
- ✓ Subcontractors;
- ✓ GR-AL Authority (JTS, MA)

¹ <http://www.greece-albania.eu/index.php/downloads/category/15-for-all-partners.html>

External communication focusing on eight groups:

- i. General public & the local population
- ii. Local, regional, national & European stakeholders relevant to cultural and tourist activities
- iii. Local, regional and national authorities (public and private ones)
- iv. Policy makers specialized in the domain of cultural and tourist activities
- v. Potential tourists
- vi. Local, regional and national tourist offices specialized in mass-media, which shall contribute to the promotion of the project
- vii. Potential entrepreneurs within the tourism industry field
- viii. Tourism associations and relevant NGOs

Within the framework of the project, the following activities are also fulfilled:

- Activities, such as the distribution of leaflets, press releases, newsletters, communication materials (brochures, CDS, banner), public events.
- Distribution of the platform, the virtual resources (web-based ones), direct contacts (public events) and media.

To get hold of stakeholders, the team has made use of a variety of distribution channels. Below we are providing examples of concrete actions to achieve the highest degree of utilization and dissemination of results:

- On-line Actions:
 - o E-mail
 - o Website and social media network
 - o Press Releases and articles

MAPO

AKTUALITET OP ED NGËRÇ SPORT LIFESTYLE DIKUR LIBRI & IDE KULTURA ONE PLANET TEKNOLOGJI

Kështjellat në dritën digjitale

Postuar më: 20 Qershor 2016 13:04



Qendra UET bëhet pjesë e NetCastle, rrjeti për krijimin dhe promovimin e kështjellave përmes digjitalizimit

"Qendra UET, në bashkëpunim me Universitetin Europian të Tiranës, Institucionin e Prefektit Gjirokastër, Njësinë Rajonale të Korfuz-it si edhe Njësinë Rajonale të Thespotisë kanë ndërmarrë një projekt për promovimin e trashëgimisë kulturore përmes teknologjive të reja të informacionit, i mbështetur nga fondet IPA CBC të Komisionit Europian."

Projekti NetCastle ka nisur zbatimin qysh prej Korkut të vitit 2014 nën IPA CBC "Programi Greqi-Shqipëri", me mbështetjen e Bashkimit Europian. Për implementimin e këtij projekti, Qendra UET bashkëpunon me Prefekturën e Qarkut Gjirokastër dhe Rajonin e Ishujve Jonian/Njësinë Rajonale të Korfuz-it, ashtu si dhe me Rajonin e Epirit/Njësinë Rajonale të Thespotisë.

Ditën e mërkurë, në datë 15 Qershor, u mbajt një takim konstruktiv ndërmjet partnerëve të projektit "NetCastle" në ambientet e Universitetit Europian të Tiranës. Në kuadër të projektit, Qendra UET në rolin e partnerit të projektit ka realizuar me sukses krijimin e platformës për promovimin e kështjellave, duke përmendur këtu Digjitalizimin e informacioneve të përzgjedhura për sa iu përket monumenteve historike të zonës dhe zhvillimin për aplikimin e përshkimeve virtuale brenda hapësirës kohore, nëpërmjet përfaqësimeve 3D të monumenteve historike. Diskutimet lidheshin me përpjekjet e përbashkëta të të dyja vendeve për trajtimin e sfidave të njëjta kulturore. Palët dakordësojnë dhe për mirjen e turizmit në rajon, rinovimin kulturor të tunzmit (e-tourism), diferencimin e kështjellave nga monumente të tjera antike klasike, sensibilizimin dhe mobilizimin e komunitetit shkencor lokal, fuqizimin dhe sinkronizimin e metodave informuese për të gjithë banorët dhe vizitorët nëpërmjet përdorimit të teknologjive të reja, kontribut në edukimin kulturor të të rinjve.



Note: "Castles in the digital era" - this is the title of the above article published in the "MAPO" Newspaper in June 20, 2016. Among other things, it is emphasized that UET Center is part of NET-CASTLE, a network for promoting the castles and setting up their digitalization.

- Production of a leaflet titled "NET-CASTLE"
- Production of a banner titled "NET-CASTLE"
- Uploading the main materials of the Work Package in the website
- Off-line Actions:
 - Communication Plan
 - Annual monitoring and evaluation plan
 - Developing a practical guide
 - Conference / Organization of public meeting
- Activities financed by IPA fund have had the logo of the program during the following activities:
 - meetings (working materials of banners)
 - publications

In order to raise awareness for the objectives of the project and its results among the local population, potential tourists, and other stakeholders such as the tourism industry actors, and local, regional and national authorities, the project created a logo and a slogan that were shown on all informative important materials of the project (agenda, presentations, press releases, newsletters, brochures, leaflets, banners, etc). Means of internal communication were properly used between NET-CASTLE partners: Internal consortium, contact list with all the details for each contact (name, organization, e-mail, phone and fax numbers); this list included all parties involved in the project. The list was provided to all partners of the project and facilitated the internal communication and the exchange of information within the consortium.

Project partners and the general public also used the external communication tools, as given below:

The respective logo was prepared:



Models that were prepared for the project are as follows:

- Paper / page documents
- Agenda
- Press Release
- Newsletter
- Presentation Format

Example:

The Project is co-funded by the European Union and by National Funds of Greece & Albania under the IPA Cross-Border PROGRAMME "Greece - Albania 2007-2013"



Other informational materials to be distributed were:

- Leaflets / Brochures
- Letterhead
- Files
- Pens
- Banner (in three languages: Albanian, English and Greek)
- CDs that contained the output of the project implementation – prepared by the Albanian team

Network Creation and Promotion of Castles

NetCastle



www.netcastle.eu

Project Partners

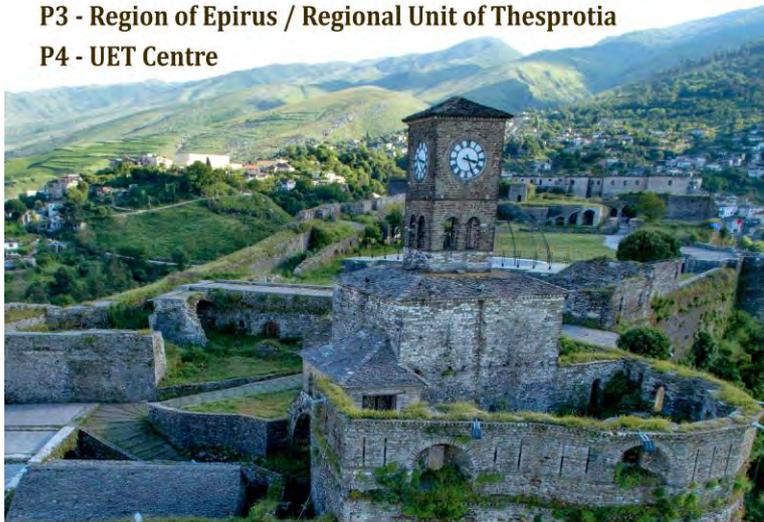


LP1 - Region of Ionian Islands / Regional Unit of Corfu

LP2 - Institution of Prefect of Gjirokastra Region

P3 - Region of Epirus / Regional Unit of Thesprotia

P4 - UET Centre



The Project is co-funded by the European Union and by National Funds of Greece & Albania under the IPA Cross-Border PROGRAMME "Greece - Albania 2007-2013"



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Tel: +30 26613 61537 - Fax: +30 26610 32525 / Website: www.pin.gov.gr - Email: pin@pin.gov.gr



- **NetCastle** (Network creation and promotion of castles) is being implemented under the Greece-Albania IPA Cross Border Programme 2007-2013.

- The overall objective of **NetCastle** project is the emergence and promotion of a common cultural product in the cross-border region to boost tourism industry with the use of new technologies and e-tourism. The use of new technologies is the driving force for the implementation of the project, to raise region appealing and tourism attraction, but also to effectively spread the respective region's history and culture.

- **NetCastle** project aims to create a network for visibility, renovation and enhancement of cultural heritage of the historical castle of the targeted areas. The project is designed to provide the user with a multi cultural and educational experience with the use of suitably adapted innovative interactive experiential services. The project aspires to offer to the user a tour through time and space by utilizing 3D representations of historical monuments. The use of the latest technologies enables versatile and layered use of digitalized data thus increasing the usability and end-user groups of the proposed services.

NetCastle Project Meetings

Kick off Meeting | Corfu | 07/11/2014



The kick off meeting of the project Netcastle was organized from the overall Lead Partner, Region of Ionian Islands/ Regional Unit of Corfu, on 7th of November 2014. During the first meeting were set all project activities each partner had to deliver as well as the timetable for project completion.

2nd Project Meeting | Gjirokastra | 16/05/2016



Following the implementation of Netcastle project and the timeline of activities, the Prefecture of Gjirokastra organized the second Management Meeting with all project partners, on 16th of May 2016. The meeting took place at the premises of Hotel Cajupi, in Gjirokastra.

3rd Project Meeting | Tirana | 15/06/2016



The third Management Meeting of NetCastle project organized by UET Centre on 15th of June 2016 and took place at the premises of European University of Tirana in Tirana. During the 2nd and 3rd project meetings NetCastle partners discussed about the current status of the project and the remaining activities for successful project implementation.

Work Package 3 – WP3 - Development of the platform

This work package consists of the data collection and the digitalization of the information.

3.1: Development of the action plan

3.2: Data collection

3.3: Digitalization of information

After the implementation of the action plan, the selected expert started collecting information and materials from archives, based on the rules of data collection from public institutions. The following is an illustration of the materials taken from archives in order to meet the project objectives.

a. Shën Triadha Castle

Note: The following table presents a card from the archive. We can mention some of the numerous details of the castle in question, given in this card, such as, number, typology, code, address, location, protection status, institution administering the castle, ownership, geographical coordinates, former use, actual use, protection area etc. In the next page there are details about condition of the monument, such as technical data, architectonic description, restorations etc.

KARTELA PËR TRASHËGIMINË KULTURORE TË PALUAJTSHME				
TË DHËNA ADMINISTRATIVE				
NR. I SKEDËS	104			
EMËRTIMI	KALAJA E SHEN TRADHËS			
FUSHA	ARKITEKTURË			
GJINIA	KALA			
TIPOLOGJIA	KALA			
KODI I ARKIVIT				
ADRESA	FSHATI VALARE			
VENDNDODHJA	RRETHI	BASHKIA	KOMUNA	FSHATI
	Gjirokastër		Lunxheri	Valare
STATUSI I MBROJTJES (KATEGORIA I, II)	Kategori e I			
NR. I VENDIMIT , DATA E SHPALLJES	Nr.6 – 15/01/1963			
INSTITUCIONI I SHPALLJES	REKTORATI I UNIVERSITETIT SHTETEROR			
DATIMI (VITI / SHEK)	1809-1810			
INSTITUCIONI, ADMINISTRUES / DRKK	GJIROKASTËR			
PËRDORIMI FILLESTAR	KALA			
PËRDORIMI I TANISHËM	RENOJE (MONUMENT)			
A KA RRETHIM OBJEKTIT? / GJENDJA E TIJ	-			
ZONA E MBROJTUR	-			
KOORDINATAT GJEOGRAFIKE TE MONUMENTIT	Longitude :20 08'57.4"E Latitude :40 07'15.9"N			
KOORDINATA GJEOGRAFIKE TË ZONËS SË MBROJTUR	-			
PRONËSIA	SHTET			
EMRI I PRONARIT (-VE)				
NR. I PRONËSISE	-			
ZONA KADASTRALE	-			
SIPËRFAQJA E NDËRTIMIT / LARTËSIA E OBJEKTIT	S=824m2 / L=7m			
SIPËRFAQJA E PËRGJ. E RRETHIMIT	-			
SIPËRFAQJA E ZONËS SË MBROJTUR	-			
A KA RRUGË AUTOMOBILISTIKE DERI	Kemi vetem nje trase te pa shtruar qe kalohet me veshtiresi.			

NË MONUMENTI / GJENDJA E SAJ				
TË DHENA TEKNIKE				
PËRSHKRIMI ARKITEKTONIK	<p>Kështjella e Shën-Triadhës u ndërtua rreth viteve 1809-1810 mbi një nga lartësitë e vargut të kodrave, që shtrihen në lindje të luginës së Drinosit, përballë qytetit të Gjirokastrës, me qëllim që të kontrollonte rrugët e furnizimeve dhe për të kryer here pas here inkursione kundër këtij qyteti, që duhet ta ndjente më nga afër praninë e fuqisë së Ali Pashës. Kështjella ka formë katërkëndëshe me katër kulla poligonale qoshet, ndërsa hyrja e vetme hapet nga veriu kundrejt njerës nga brinjët më të ngushta midis dy kullave të kësaj ane. Teknika e ndërtimit është po ajo, e njohur në ndërtimet e tjera të Aliut, me gurë të vegjël drejtkëndësh, të punuar me kujdes e të vendosur në rreshta të rregullt. Në gjendjen që ka arritur në ditët tona, kjo kështjellë nuk ruan as parapete, frëngji apo elemente të tjera të fortifikimit.</p> <p>Pjesa më e ruajtur e një muri dhe e një kulle arrin lartësinë 7 m. Ndërtimet e brendshme kanë qenë të shumta në këtë kështjellë. Ato shërbenin për qëndrimin e garnizonit, ruajtjen e ushqimit dhe municionit. Prej tyre ruhet vetëm një kthinë e mbuluar me qemer cilindrik, e cila ka si mur të jashtëm vetë murin jugor të kështjellës. Megjithatë një nga kështjellat e dobëta të Ali Pashës, ajo ishte e denjë për të përmbushur qëllimin që i qe caktuar. Këtë e tregojnë ngjarjet e mëvonshme për pushtimin e kalasë së Gjirokastrës si dhe vetë fakti që gjirokastritët nuk kishin një forcë të tillë sulmuese që të pengonin ndërtimin e saj. Një dicka tjetër që e favorizonte garnizonin e Kalasë së Shën Triadhes ishte dhe vete terreni i lartë kodrinor, mbi të cilin qe ndërtuar kështjella.</p>			
	PËRSHKRIMI KONSTRUKTIV	Teknika e ndërtimit është po ajo, e njohur në ndërtimet e tjera të Aliut, me gurë të vegjël drejtkëndësh, të punuar me kujdes e të vendosur në rreshta të rregullt. Në gjendjen që ka arritur në ditët tona, kjo kështjellë nuk ruan as parapete, frëngji apo elemente të tjera të fortifikimit. Pjesa më e ruajtur e një muri dhe e një kulle arrin lartësinë 7 m.		
NDËRHYRJET KONSERVUESE / RESTAURUESE NË VITE,	VITI	VITI	VITI	VITI
SHKALLËT E NDERHYRJES / 1 / 2 / 3 / 4 / 5 / (nga nderhyrja me e lehtë tek me thellë)				
GJENDJA E KONSERVIMIT	ÇATIA / MBULESA	DYER / DRITARE	TAVANI / NDERKATI	STRUKTURA E DRURIT NE AMBIENTET E BRENDSEM (MAFILI, KOLONA, etj)
	AFRESKU	IKONOSTASI	MINARJA / KEMBANARJA	DYSHEMEJA/MOZAIK
SHKALLËT E GJENDJES / 1 / 2 / 3 / 4 / 5 /				

<i>(nga problematika me e lehtë tek me rëndë)</i>				
<p>NDËRHRYJET KONSERVUESE / RESTAURUESE QË PROPOZOHEN</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Pastrim nga vegjetacioni parazit (i ulet dhe i larte). Vecanerisht ne kullen jug-perendimore e cila per momentin eshte e shkaterruar nga rrenjet e mbi 5 pemeve fiku te eger. 2. Konservim murature (kreu i saj) per te mos lejuar depertimin e lageshtise. 3. Restaurim i muratures me tekniken e qepjes. 4. Drenazhime. 5. Plotesim murature. 6.Heqje e betonit te hedhur nga ushtria para viteve 1990. 			

DOKUMENTACIONI GRAFIK DHE HARTOGRAFIK

ORTHOFOTO



Shën Triadha Castle

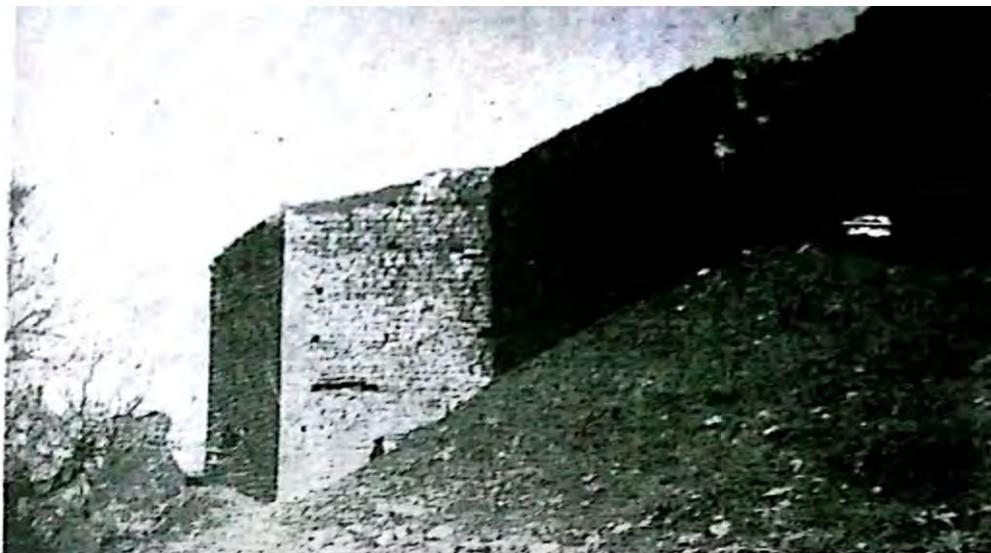


Fig. 167. Pamje e kalasë së Shën-Triadhës, Gjirokastrë.

Vetë pozicioni i kësaj kalaje, në një vend të thellë e të izoluar, të rrethuar në të katër anët me kodrina e male, fshihte synimet e Ali Pashës për pushtimin e Butrintit para se Turqia të kishte hyrë në luftë me Francën. Një qëllim të ngjashëm ka pasur edhe kështjella e Shën-Triadhës (fig. 167). Ajo u ndërtua për të mbajtur nën presion qytetin e Gjirokastrës, të cilin Aliu prej kohësh ëndërronte ta fuste nën zotërimin e tij. Kështjella e Shën-Triadhës u ndërtua rreth viteve 1809-1810 mbi një nga lartësitë e vargut të kodrave, që shtrihen në lindje të luginës së Drinosit, përballë qytetit të Gjirokastrës, me qëllim që të kontrollonte rrugët e furnizimeve dhe për të kryer herë pas here inkursione kundër këtij qyteti, që duhet ta ndjente më nga afër praninë e fuqisë së Ali Pashës. Kështjella ka formë katërkëndëshe me katër kulla poligonale në qoshet, ndërsa hyrja e vetme hapej nga veriu kundrejt njerës nga brinjët më të ngushta midis dy kullave të kësaj ane. Teknika e ndërtimit është po ajo, e njohur në ndërtimet e tjera të Aliut, me gurë të vegjël drejtkëndësh, të punuar me kujdes e të vendosur në rreshta të rregullt. Në gjendjen që ka arritur në ditët tona, kjo kështjellë nuk ruan as parapete, frëngji apo elemente të tjera të fortifikimit. Pjesa më e ruajtur e një muri dhe e një kulle arrin lartësinë 7 m. Ndërtimet e brendshme kanë qenë të shumta në këtë kështjellë. Ato shërbenin për qëndrimin e garnizonit, ruajtjen e ushqimit dhe municionit. Prej tyre ruhet vetëm një kthinë e mbuluar me qemer cilindrik, e cila ka si mur të jashtëm vetë murin jugor të kështjellës. Megjithëse një nga kështjellat e dobëta të Ali Pashës, ajo ishte e denjë për të përmbushur qëllimin që i qe caktuar. Këtë e tregojnë ngjarjet e mëvonshme për pushtimin e kalasë së Gjirokastrës si dhe vetë fakti që gjirokastritët

Note: The Shen Triadha Castle is a very beautiful Albanian orthodox church just in the middle of the fortress. It has a beautiful architecture and stunning views of the surrounding parts of the city and the mountains. Also called The Holy Trinity Church, Shen Triadha Castle contains important frescoes of Byzantine influence.

Gjirokastra Castle – the northern gallery

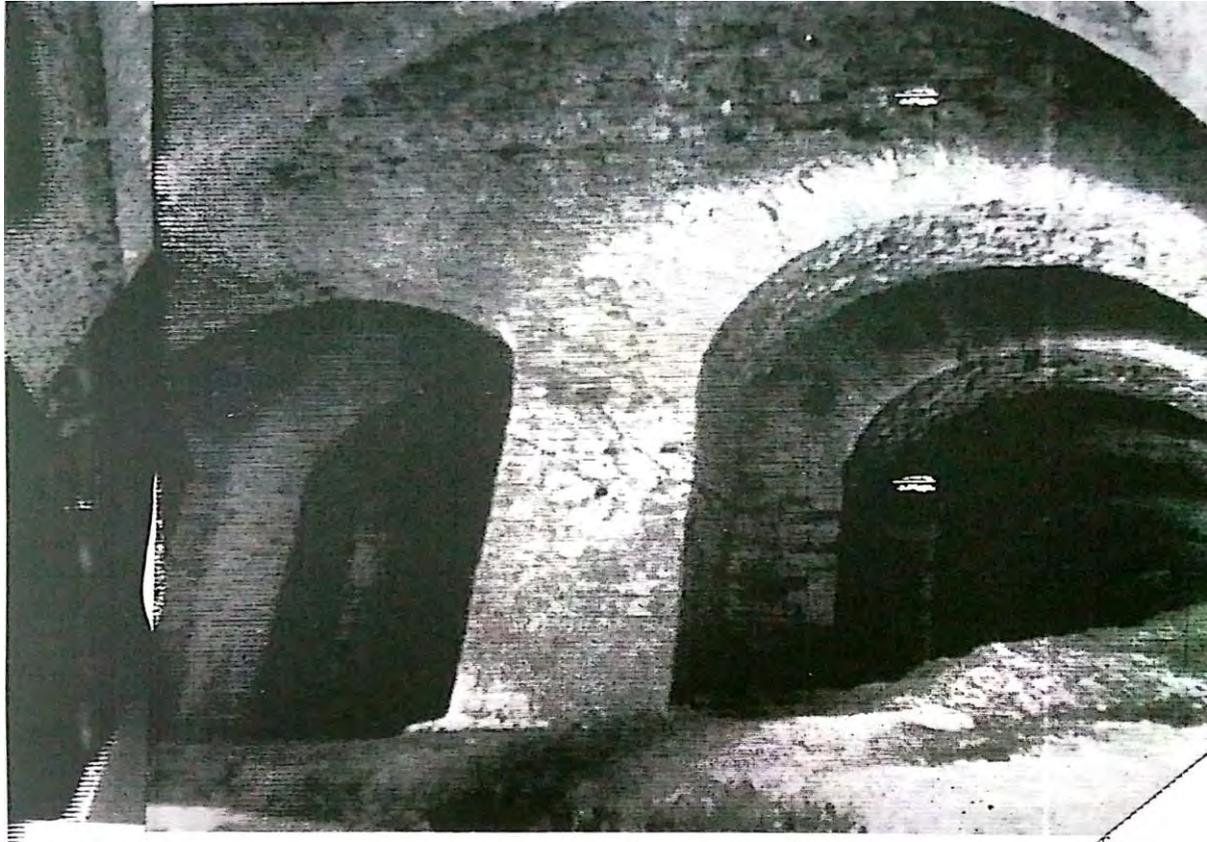


Fig. 176 d. Kalaja e Gjirokastrës Galeria Veriore.

Note: Gjirokastra Castle is mentioned for the first time as a city and a castle in 1336. At that time, it was the center of an Albanian feudal family. Later, during the lordship of Gjin Bue Shpata, it was included in the Despotate of Epir. According to them, the castle underwent two construction phases, the first one during the Gjin Bue Shpata rule, and the second in the 19th century during the regime of Ali Pasha of Tepelena, who in 1812 occupied the fortress with a garrison of 5,000 soldiers. The castle has various underground storehouses, which, were used to secure munitions and food storage. Chronicles of the period mention that 1,500 people worked on the construction of Ali Pasha's castle.

Tepelena Castle

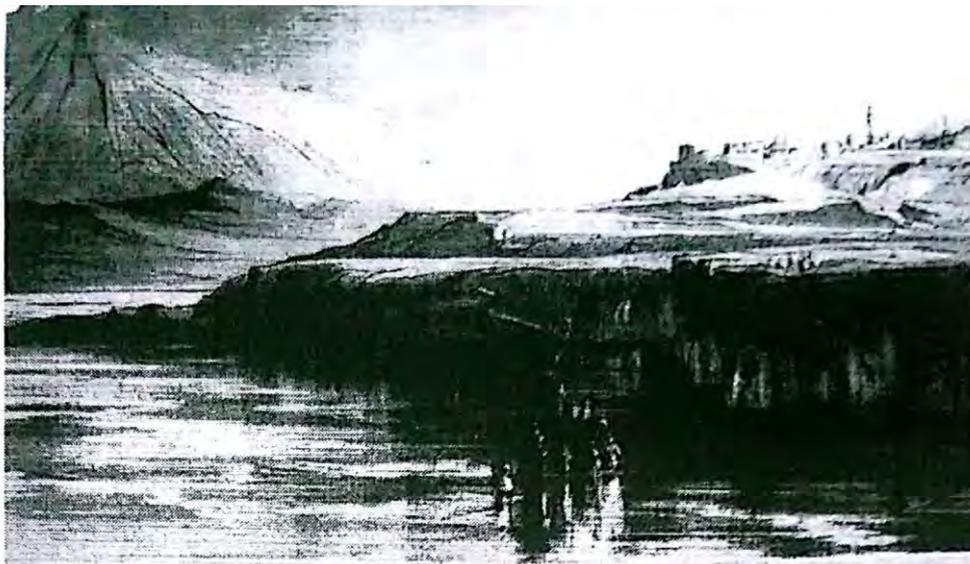


Fig. 176 e. Pamje e kalasë së Tepelenës. Gravurë e shek. XIX (viz. E. Lir).

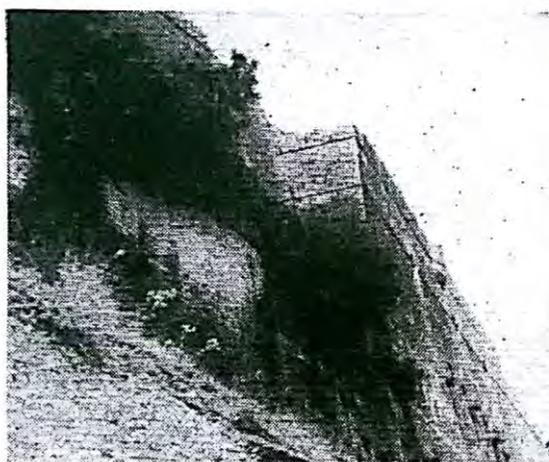


Fig. 176. Pamje e pjesshme e kalasë së Tepelenës.

kalasë dhe në anën tjetër mbi pilona masivë 4 m të gjerë të lidhur me harqe. Pas galerisë së përmendur vjen një sistem dyfish galerish me mbulesë qemresh, që shkojnë paralel me murin rrethues dhe si të parat, mbështeten mbi harqe dhe pilona masivë. Një galeri e tillë, por rrëzë murit jugor shkon në drejtim të veriut për tek bastioni i këndit (fig. 176 d). Galeritë e brendshme e shtonin solitetin e kalasë në përgjithësi, dhe ajo që është më e rëndësishme, e mbronin prej goditjeve nga sipër.

Tepelena, vendlindja e Ali Pashës, ishte një nga selitë më të preferuara të tij. Prandaj, pak kohë pasi ai e shkëputi Tepelenën nga dora e Ibrahim Pashës, sundimtarit të pashallëkut të Vlorës, filloi ndërtimin e një saraji të madh që kishte përfunduar në vitet e para të shek. XIX, ndërsa ndërtimin e kalasë, Aliu e filloi, kur po hynte në konflikt të hapur me Portën e Lartë. Një mbishkrim në gjuhën greke, që është murosur mbi hyrjen lindore, e daton këtë ndërtim me 1819⁷⁾.

7) S. Bejko. Kalaja e Tepelenës. Monumentet 2, 1971, 103-112.

Tepelena Castle was built by Ali Pasha in the end of 18th century in the town of Tepelena. It was the second most important castle during his reign, after that in Ioanina. The construction of this monument was finished in the year 1819. It has an area of 4 - 5 hectares and is protected by three towers. The height of the walls reaches 10 meters.

Fortified seraglios of Këlcyra



Fig 179. Sarajet e fortifikuara të Këlcyrës.

Note: The castle was built in the 13th century. When the town was incorporated in the Kingdom of Albania in the late 13th century it was ruled by the Muzaka family. The correspondence of the Roman Curia with the Albanian nobility indicates that in 1319 it was ruled by Count Mentul Muzaka. After its capture by the Byzantine army, the Albanian population rebelled against Byzantine rule in 1335 and captured the fortress of the town.

The Turks advanced and also a seraglio built in the 19th century. At this time Këlcyrë experienced its bloom as a key trading center between Berat, Korça and Gjirokastra.

Digitalization process of the castles in Gjirokastra Prefecture (Action 3.3)

Work on digitization began in April 25, 2016, starting from field visits, consultation with maps of castles, etc.

Initially the Work Group contacted the Gjirokastra Prefecture to obtain the permission to enter and work inside the castles. The Work Group started to build the network points, by measuring them by GPS, having a station in each castle. It is also used a supporting device – a drone DJI Spreading Wings S1000.

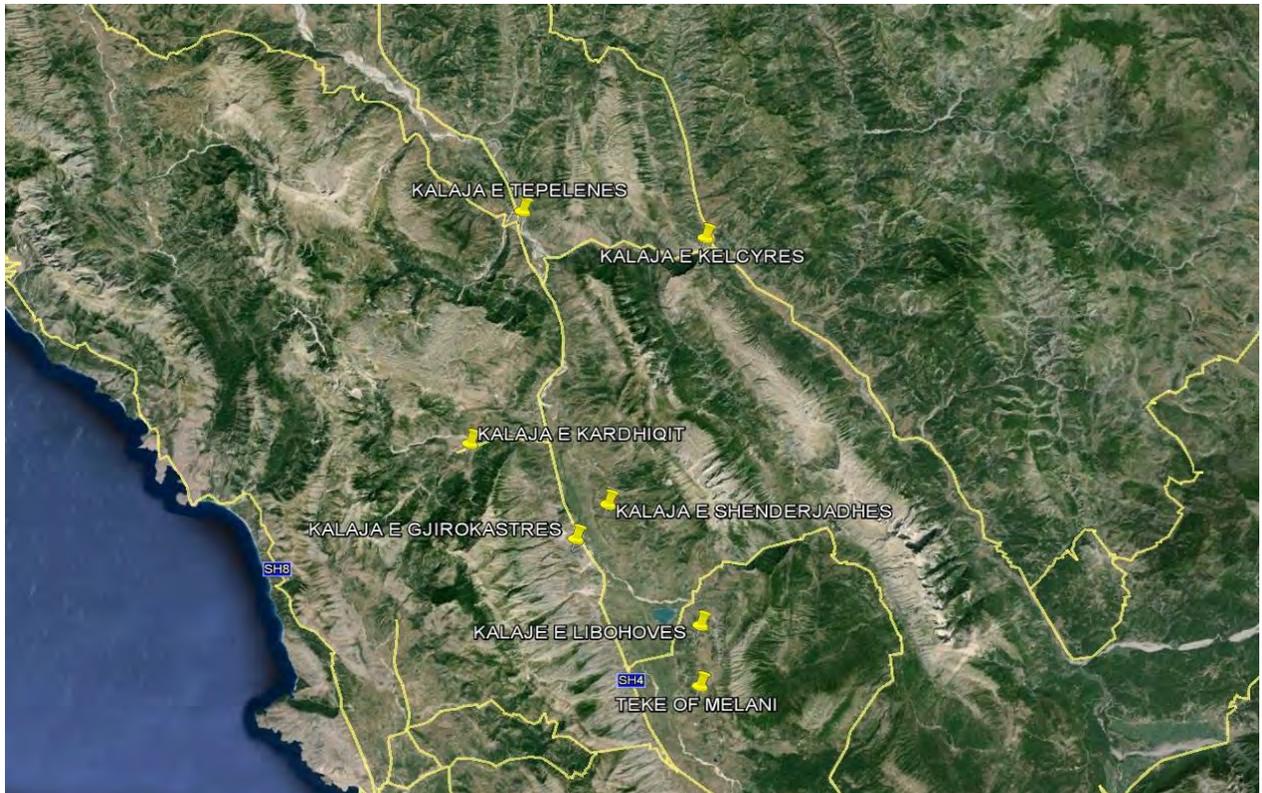
The team started work in the Gjirokastra castle, focusing in the internal and external areas. Then, the team carried out its work in the castles of Tepelena, Kardhiq, Libohova, Këlcyra, Shtepeza, Melan, Shën Triadha.

The planning consisted in four main phases:

1. Firstly, the team conducted the measurements of several points, inside and outside the castles. This phase was necessary for the application, as 3D model and map of each castle had to be built correctly.
2. Secondly, the points with measured coordinates were processed by computers and the appropriate applications. Two Agisoft-s and Pix4D-s were used in this phase (these are powerful image processing applications).
3. Thirdly, the drone started taking photos on several planes for each castle. This consisted in taking photos of each castle first in a height of 40-50 meters, with an angle of 45 degree. Than a third plan of photos was taken in front of the castle.
4. Fourthly, the photos will be processed by computers to generate the 3D model of the castles. This phase consisted in providing, batch processing with Pix4D Mapper, using new technologies simply based on the content of the image, by converting these images into highly precise, customizable and timely results for a wide range of GIS and CAD applications. (Pix4Dmapper automatically processes terrestrial and aerial imagery acquired by light-weight UAV or aircraft using its innovative technology based purely on image content.)

During the first week, the team conducted measurements with GPS in order to specify correct coordinates inside and outside the castles. The points and marks helped the team build a 3D model of the castle with very high accuracy. During the second week, the team finished all the necessary measurements with GPS, whereas during the third week the areal photographs were taken for all the designated castles; the photographs where taken from several planes, with high resolution photos and high accuraccy positioning. During the forth and fifth weeks, the team conducted the necessary processing of photos and GPS measurements with the aproprate softwares like Argisoft and Topcon.

GOOGLE IMAGES OF ALL THE CASTLES:



Photographs of the castles taken from the workplace:









Challenges the team came across during the work implementation:

- Due to the nature of the work, the weather was a very important factor for the work progress. Unfortunately, during May and June, the rainy days have prevented the team from working several times.



- In some of the castles, especially the small ones and those in considerable distance from the towns, the terrain was not so friendly, and as a result the Work Group could hardly inspect these castles in detail (especially around Këlcyra castle where the

terrain was extremely ragged and therefore difficult to get around).

- In most cases, the castles were poorly maintained, covered by grass and other vegetation; this was another obstacle in conducting the footage from the drone in order to get a clear 3D model directly from pictures.

Work Package 4 – WP 4 - Creating the platform for promoting the castles

This work package consisted in the creation of a platform for promoting the castles

4.1: Development of the GIS application

4.2: 3D models database

4.3: Development of the virtual tour application

4.4: Development of extranet

4.5: Development of the 360 degrees panoramas

Referring to the terms of reference, the work which was carried out to successfully fulfill the contract, is closely related to the following objectives

- Digitalization of the collected data for:

1. Gjirokastra Castle;
2. Tepelena Castle;
3. Libohova Castle;
4. Kardhiq Castle;
5. Kercyra Castle;
6. Shtëpëzë Castle;
7. Melan Castle;
8. Shën Triadhë Castle;

producing 3D object mesh for each castle that could be easily exported in 3D modeling software upon which 3D rendering frames can be produced and 360 degree panoramas can be delivered.

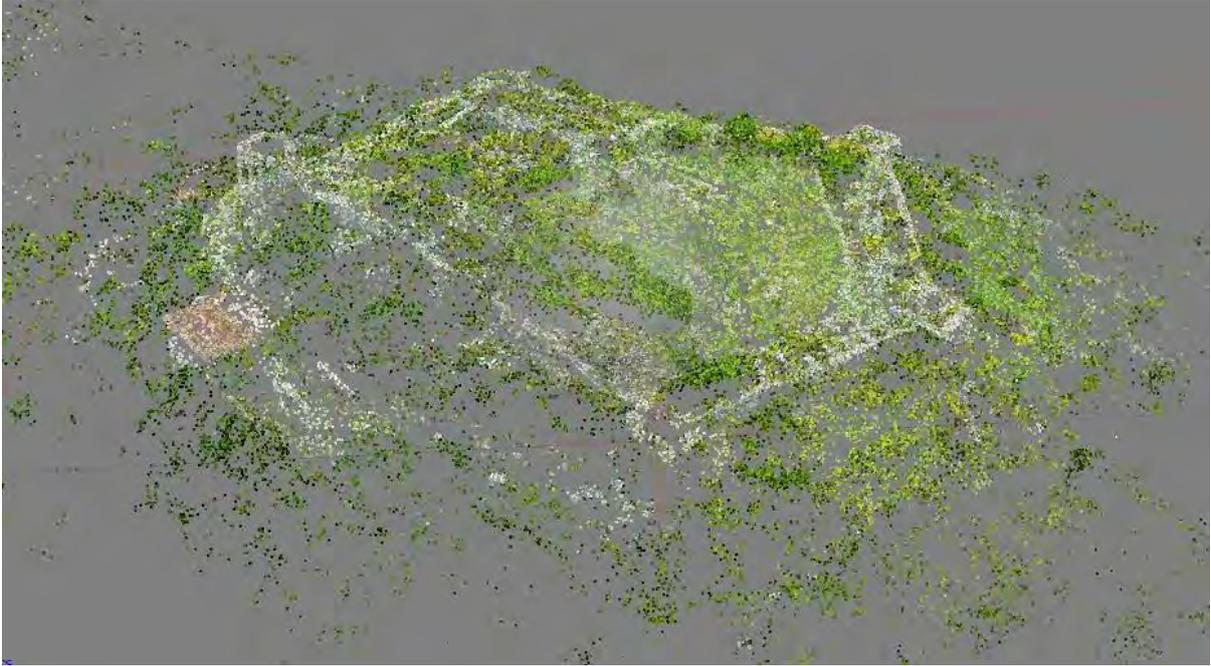
- Producing 360 degree panoramas, using photos taken in:

1. Selo Castle;
2. Palokaster Castle;
3. Jerma (Antigonea) Castle;
4. Labova e Kryqit Castle;

using photos taken with digital camera as much as necessary, and stitching together to create 360 degree panoramic views for each of four above castles.

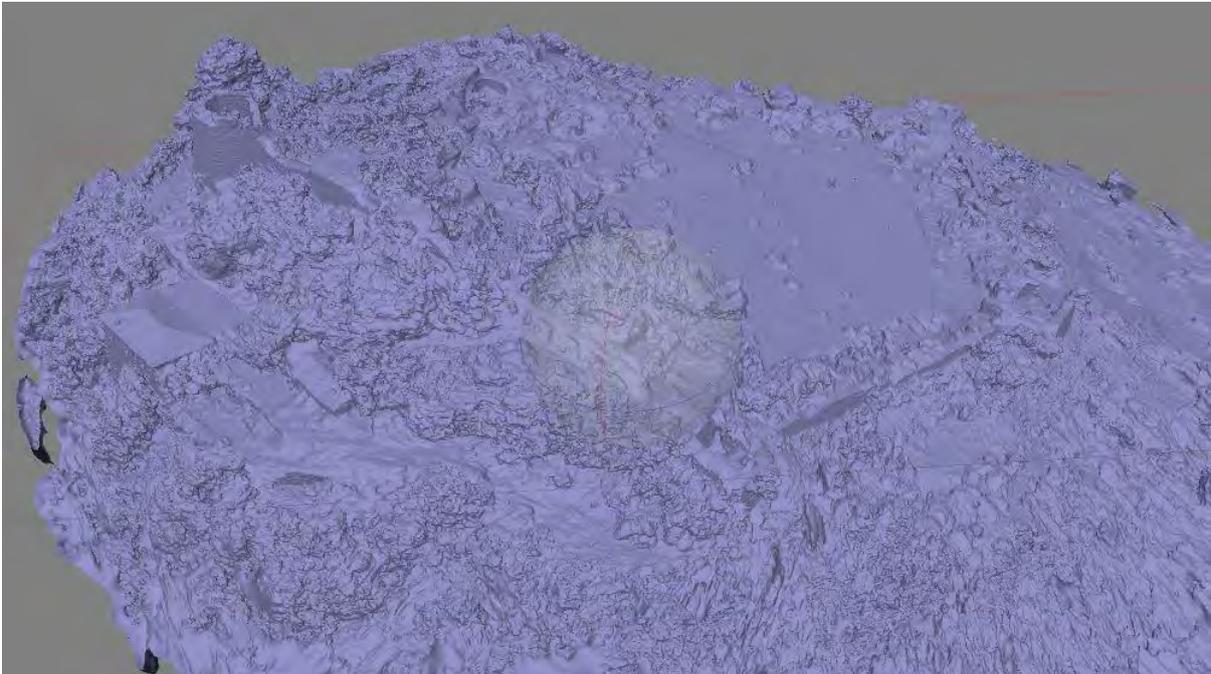
For Gjirokastra Castle, Tepelena Castle, Libohova Castle, Kardhiq Castle, Kercyra Castle, Shtëpëzë Castle, Melan Castle and Shën Triadha Castle, detailed activities are as follows:

Activities in photos



Point Cloud mesh

From point cloud mesh, using Batch Process, we have built the mesh of the 3d object.



Solid mesh

This process can take several hours, even days in order to generate the 3d mesh. The time of building the full 3d mesh depends on the capacity of the computers running the process.

After all meshes were built in a high quality model, the team passed to the next step of the generation of the 3D model. The next phase consisted in the creation of the texture, blended together from all the photos and creating a mosaic texture.

Using batch process/build texture, the team generated the texture of the 3D object for each castle.

This process can take several hours. This is the timeframe it took us for each castle:

<u>Item in process</u>	<u>Processing time/building mesh</u>
1. Gjirokastra Castle	10 hours
2. Tepelena Castle;	12 hours
3. Libohova Castle;	6 hours
4. Kardhiq Castle;	4 hours
5. Kercyra Castle;	6 hours
6. Shtëpëzë Castle;	2 hours
7. Melan Castle;	8 hours
8. Shën Triadhë Castle;	6 hours



Shaded mesh/3d model + texture

The experts have followed the same steps to generate the *Tiled* model, which is a model needed to export and to upload in an interactive way on the NET-CASTLE web. The work process for the castle of Gjirokastra only, lasted approximately 3 to 6 hours and 1 to 2 hours for the other castles.



Tiled model

For the next phase, it was needed to export all the 3D models of each castle in .obj format, so that they could be imported into 3ds max software to make a perfect materialization and to generate the rendered frames in the specified positions around the model.

However, they were going to create another way for the interactive view of the 3d models using 3ds max software producing the animated frames and stitching them together using other software-s and publishing them in .html5 format. With these two methods, it will be easier for the NET-CASTLE web builders to use our exported files and publish the 3D models for eight castles.





The final phase of this process was the creation of the 360 degree panoramas of the castles. In this case, the experts made two kinds of 360 degree panoramas.

- Using the 3d models exported in .obj format and imported in 3ds max;
- Using photos taken from digital camera in each castle.

In the first method, using 3ds max, the experts animated a camera inside the territory of each castle and generated a 360 degree spherical panorama.

In the second method, they used a tripod and a Nikon D3200 digital camera and shot pics in 360 degree circle. Then, they used Photoshop software to stitch all the photos together in a single 360 degree cylindrical panorama.





Upon processing and realizing 360 degrees panoramic images, the experts also finished the Panoramic Virtual Tour (Panoramic Virtual Tour) for each castle.

Work Package 5 – WP 5 - Evaluation and further actions

This work package consists in the evaluation of the above activities and the project development in relation to its sustainability.

5.1 Final evaluation report

Concerning the evaluation of the above activities which should be sustainable, as well as project development, a Final Report of the Project was made up. It also contains photographic data, as follows:

Digital photos of selected castles of the NET-CASTLE project



Gjirokastra Castle



Tepelena Castle



Shtëpëzë Castle



Shën Triadha Castle



Libohova Castle



Kardhiq Castle



5. PROJECT RESULTS

Taking into consideration the abovementioned objectives, upon termination of these project activities, the following results are expected:

1. Significant increase, approximately 15%, of the tourist attraction in the areas covered by the project (source: Official statistics of hotel bookings in these areas);
2. A greater number of visits to the castles website;
3. Preparation and distribution of the communications package (folders, leaflets, CD, etc.);
4. Preparation and distribution of press releases to the written and electronic media;
5. Realization of the platform for promoting the castles through the development of GIS applications and virtual tour, a bench of 3D model data, intranet spatial connection and 360 degrees panoramic view of each of the castles in these areas.
6. There are data taken from tourist agencies and local government units, showing that the rising number of the tourists and tourism empowerment are encouraging investors, fueling the local economy, attracting the public through cultural events in these castles, aligning and motivating communities of both neighboring countries in challenges and common causes.
7. The above results are consistent with the two countries strategies for the protection, preservation and promotion of cultural heritage; they are also in full compliance with EU policies for the promotion and protection of natural and cultural heritage sites of cross-border areas - in accordance with the priority axis 2.
8. Pursuant to Article 8 and the 63, on the responsibilities of public information, of the IPA Regulation for implementing such projects, part of the Commission Regulation 1828/2006, all the parties involved in the project prepared the information and communication plan according to the European Commission Guidelines on Information and Publicity:

<http://www.greece-albania.eu/index.php/downloads/category/15-for-all-partners.html>

9. Information and communication on the project progress were addressed to the following: general public, specialized mass-media, journalists' circles, European Union Delegation in Albania, local and national authorities, associations and NGOs.

Products for the project visibility were:

a. Logo and banner of the project

b. Project website

c. Brochure was prepared and printed in two languages (Albanian and English), and a public activity was organized at the end of the project

d. Newsletter was prepared especially for the project, as well as other promotional materials such as posters, small flags, pictures and promotional spot in the radio

e. The digitalization of castles in the Gjirokastra Prefecture was carried out during April – July, 2016

Achievements Indicators

Communication Tool	Indicators		
	LP2	P4	TOTAL
Continuation Policy Report	-	1 (250 prints)	1 (250 prints)
Leaflets / Brochures	2500	-	2500
Banner	1	-	1
CD	2500	-	2500
Photos	4	-	4
Final Public Event	-	1	1

Table 3: Achievements Indicators for Communication Activities

Communication Tool	Human Resources	
	Person	Days
Continuation Policy Report	2	30
Leaflets / Brochures	2	15
Banner	2	3
CD	2	15
Photos	1	2
Final Public Events	3	7

Table 4: Person /days required to implement the communication activities

6. Some characteristics related to the implementation of the NET-CASTLE Project

Upon completing the NET-CASTLE Project, we would like to sum up some of the characteristics of this specific project:

- The idea for this project has undergone a certain evolution – ranging from evidencing and identifying historical values of the castles in question and their similar features to the cultural heritage integration in the economic life of the region, by promoting the organized tourist services. This integrated approach to solving current and future problems of these cross-border areas having a rich cultural heritage is not only a feature, but the most prominent value of this cooperation.
- NET-CASTLE Project was focused on an area with an extremely rich and diverse history, not merely on a monument or a distant problem; for this reason, the successful realization of this project required a complex organization and planning, knowledge of a range of disciplines (mainly in the field of new technologies) and a significant and ongoing human commitment.
- Preparation of a large number of digital photos in 3D format is a great contribution to the recognition of the cultural heritage of these areas, their historical and cultural values and today's problems for a sustainable development in the tourism sector; it is a contribution which raises these values at an important international stage, making them easily reachable by international audiences.
- One of the unique contributions to this project is related to the sustainable and integrated development strategies of the cultural tourism and its rich heritage.
- Another original message arising from the implementation of this project is that the preservation, enhancement and promotion of these castles cannot be effective at international level or to the generations to come, without being integrated into the tourist and economic life, and as a result to the spiritual life of the residents of these areas. Currently, only in a dynamic economic context with new technologies, the preservation and promotion of heritage can be realistically developed. In doing so,

this new context will become a driving force for the development of cultural tourism and the preservation of the natural environment.

- Being updated with modern image tools, this project represents an irreplaceable source of recognition for the common cultural heritage.
- Efficiency and sustainability of such an investment is not only related to the financial dimension, but also to the social and educational dimensions, raising thus the awareness for the preservation and promotion of this heritage, as well as contributing to the cultural education of young people.

7. Project continuation

The results of NET-CASTLE project pave the way for some concrete short- and medium-term achievements:

- ✓ Creation of new jobs and therefore generation of more revenues from the expansion of cultural tourism in areas where these castles are situated, under the principle of heritage assimilated by the economic development.
- ✓ The project requires further training programs for the tourist-cultural actors and empowering the hospitable cultural tourism services.
- ✓ With its many benefits, the project will become a prominent social value.
- ✓ Identification and promotion of the development priorities for the cultural tourism expansion are among the basic steps for a sustainable and integrated development.
- ✓ Promotion and implementation of such projects in the field remains a permanent challenge of cross-border cooperation even in the coming years.
- ✓ The view of these castles is not only a fascinating testimony of their still-little-known beauty, but also an invitation to act in favor of promoting the wonders of other Albanian and Greek cultural heritage sites.
- ✓ The project helps setting the background for a better harmonization and improvement of the delicate ties between the economic perspectives on the one hand, and the historical value system on the other.
- ✓ The project bridges the gap between the civil daily life and the broad public interest towards a cultural past embodied in monumental heritage.

- ✓ The NET-CASTLE project creates a solid basis for raising awareness among the population of these areas mainly in technical legal terms, even though not in allegorical terms, in the sense that the cultural heritage – apart from being a state property - is also community property.
- ✓ In future terms, the project encourages the enrichment of the cultural identity and values through the evaluation of the past, by turning the complexity of this cultural heritage in a positive message on cultural identities for both neighboring countries.
- ✓ The project constantly produces opportunities to assist local communities in their commitment to the preservation and promotion of these historical tourist centers, so that the growing cultural tourism shall not harm those values which make its sources.
- ✓ The project serves as a reference point in educating local communities about the risk of converting the heritage into trade, or the risk of a superficial perception of the past, in order to view them as tourist facilities - not as artificial objects, because too often, under the pretext of popular culture and democratization, commercial interests lie behind some projects trying to develop such communities.
- ✓ The project also paves the way for a reassessment of castles in the two countries and the redefinition of castles in terms of protection, maintenance and use, observing the correct architectural identification within the stylistic family they belong to.
- ✓ The project promotes the society to evaluate the nature of its historical sources and to identify ways for promotions, not out of nostalgia, but in favor of the development mindset.
- ✓ The project brings about increasing efficiency, sensitivity and feasibility toward cultural heritage in general and castles in particular.
- ✓ Finally, the implementation of this project has a great impact on cultural policies of the future government programs and its challenges to invest more in what is called “the Future of the Past”, giving thus answers to dilemmas such as:
 - o Regarding promotion, what should be prioritized?
 - o Who will decide what?
 - o According to what criteria, and in what forms of expression?
 - o Where should the cultural energies be focused?

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"The European Union is made up of 28 Member States who have decided to gradually link together their know-how, resources and destinies. Together, during a period of enlargement of 50 years, they have built a zone of stability, democracy and sustainable development whilst maintaining cultural diversity, tolerance and individual freedoms.

The European Union is committed to sharing its achievements and its values with countries and peoples beyond its borders."

The European Commission is the EU's executive body.

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