

Thinking culture as a factor of economic and social innovation

How to reinforce the cultural sector's innovation capacity? How to accompany its mutation towards new economic and social models?

The research-action “*Sostenuto, thinking culture as a factor of economic and social innovation*” cofinanced by the EU programme, INTERREG IV B MED, will be tackling these issues: the project aims at testing innovative practices – incubator, cluster, LETSystem, new modes of territorial governance – within the cultural sector, modelling these experiments and fostering their dissemination and their appropriation in the Mediterranean zone and more largely in the European zone.

The cultural sector represents a strong economic potential and a sector carrying economic and social innovation. Nevertheless, it remains unequally present on the territories, globally little structured and still insufficiently integrated within the policies of territorial development within the Med space. In this framework, the *SOSTENUTO* project consists of making evolve the methods of organisation and management of enterprises and associations in the cultural sector. It must particularly enable to test, in this sector, innovative methods of organisation and management – incubator, cluster, local exchange trading system, new forms of territorial governance – that may increase its capacities of innovation, its economic independence and may better valorise its activities within the local, regional and national economies.

4 laboratories, run by 5 out of 7 partners, will frame the experiment of 4 innovative modes of organisation and management in the cultural sector:

- **a business incubator (AMI**, centre de développement pour les musiques actuelles - Marseille - France) will back up cultural entrepreneurs in the development of their projects with shared services and accompaniment in the structuring and the long term development of their structure;
- **a cluster** bringing together enterprises in the arts, design and craft sector (**Citema**, European city for arts and crafts - Chiusi – Italy) will stimulate the development of their competences and economic activities;
- **a local exchange trading system (Bunker**, production and training in contemporary performing arts -Ljubljana - Slovenia) will allow inhabitants, NGOs and institutions of one of Ljubljana's district to trade know-how, services and competences;
- **territorial governance**, as a method of consultation (**Expeditio**, center for sustainable spatial development Kotor - Montenegro and **Zunino e Partner Progetti**, advisor and architecture office - Liguria - Italy) will target a better inclusion of the cultural sector in territorial development strategies.

On the basis of these experiments, the results will be modeled by the **University of Valencia** (ECON-CULT - Research Unit on Cultural Economics - Faculty of Economics, University of Valencia – Spain). Scenarios will be drawn addressing the necessary conditions for the emergence of new forms of economic and social organisations in the cultural sector.

The results will be disseminated by the **Relais Culture Europe** (Resource centre on Europe and Culture – Paris - France) at a local level (the partners' territories), at the regional level (the Mediterranean zone) and at the European level notably with a Green Paper on “*Culture, factor of economic and social innovation*”.