



Be.CULTOUR
Beyond cultural tourism

Larnaca, Cyprus

Action Plan



PREFACE

The Action Plan of Rural Larnaca is focusing on circular cultural tourism in an aim to make Rural Larnaca an environmentally conscious destination, a digital destination that will offer memorable cultural experiences but at the same time will improve the quality of life of local residents.

Many people have contributed to the preparation of the Rural Larnaca Action Plan. We express our appreciation for all those that have contributed, for their excellent cooperation during the action plan preparation process and their valuable comments, feedback and ideas. We are confident of their continued contribution in the upcoming important phase of implementing the Action Plan, where the formulated plans need to be converted into tangible realities and benefits for the Rural Larnaca.



GLOSSARY

3D	Three-Dimensional
A.D.	Anno Domini (number of years after Christ's birth)
Act	Action
ANETEL	Larnaca and Famagusta Districts Development Agency
AR	Augmented Reality
ArcGIS	Aeronautical Reconnaissance Coverage Geographic Information System
B.C.	Before Christ
BoD	Board of Directors
CAC	Cyprus Agrotourism Company
CUT	Cyprus University of Technology
DMoT	Deputy Ministry of Tourism of Cyprus
EU	European Union
FLAG	Fisheries Local Action Group
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GPS	Global Positioning System
HMT	Holy Metropolis of Trimithountos of the Orthodox Church of Cyprus
Km	kilometre(s)
LAG	Local Action Group
LTB	Larnaca Tourism Board
LWS	Local Workshop
Meze or mezze	selection of small dishes served as a part of multi-course meals
Natura 2000	the largest coordinated network of protected areas in the world
NGO	Non-Government Organisation
Orini Larnaca	Mountainous Larnaca
Panagia	Virgin Mary

QR code	Quick Response code
SMEs	Small and Medium Enterprises
SO	Specific Objective
St.	Saint
UCLAN	University of Central Lancashire Cyprus
WARL	Women Association of Rural Larnaka

This Action Plan was authored by Local Pilot Heritage Site Coordinators and their Contributors

Table of contents

What makes us unique? Introduction and context.	5
TANGIBLE AND INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE - INCLUDING VISITOR HOT-SPOTS	8
EXISTING DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES AND IDENTIFIED GAPS	14
How can cultural heritage innovations bring us to circular cultural tourism? Local co-creation process.	19
MAPPING OF RECOGNIZED AND HIDDEN ASSETS	23
MAPPING OF SPECIFIC HERITAGE AND CULTURAL TOURISM-RELATED CHALLENGES	26
INVOLVEMENT OF THE COMMUNITY IN ACTIONS	28
MEANING AND VALUE OF LOCAL CULTURAL HERITAGE ACTIONS FOR EUROPEAN HISTORY AND CULTURE	29
DISCOVERING THE "BEYOND" IN CIRCULAR CULTURAL TOURISM: HOW ACTIONS ADDRESS OTHER ECONOMIC SECTORS AND RESIDENTS' NEEDS.	30
Why will our Action Plan be sustainable? Monitoring and evaluation.	31
Mission Statement	32
Vision	32
Specific Objectives	32
Action 1: Create a Green – Circular Community Programme	33
SUB-ACTION 1.1: CREATE A CONSUMELESS LABEL	34
SUB-ACTION 1.2: CREATE A SUSTAINABLE INDICATORS SYSTEM FOR MEASURING THE SUSTAINABILITY OF THE DESTINATION	36

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Call: H2020-SC6-TRANSFORMATIONS-2020 – Type of action: IA (Innovation action)



ACTION 2: CREATE AUTHENTIC EXPERIENCES BASED ON THE RICH CULTURAL HERITAGE OF RURAL LARNACA	37
SUB-ACTION 2.1: LARNACA RENAISSANCE FESTIVAL	38
SUB-ACTION 2.2: NEEDLE FESTIVALS	40
SUB-ACTION 2.3: SENSORY BEE NATURE TRAIL	42
SUB-ACTION 2.4: TOURS WITH LOCALS	44
Action 3: Create a Living Lab	46
SUB-ACTION 3.1: CREATE A TOURISM LIVING LAB FOR RURAL LARNACA	46
SUB-ACTION 3.2: CREATE A TECHNICAL AND FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE OFFICE FOR PRIVATE AND PUBLIC ENTITIES	48
Action 4: Innovative methods for revolutionising interest in archaeological sites	49
SUB-ACTION 4.1: DEVELOP A WEB AR APPLICATION	50
SUB-ACTION 4.2: DEVELOP AN ONLINE EXPERIENCES BOOKING PLATFORM	51
SUB-ACTION 4.3: DEVELOP AN INTERACTIVE MAP FOR LARNACA	53
Action 5: Design of touristic packages to promote Rural Larnaca	55
SUB-ACTION 5.1: CREATE A MULTIDISCIPLINARY MUSEUM.	55
SUB-ACTION 5.2: DESIGN OF TOURISTIC THEMATIC PACKAGES AND PROMOTIONAL CAMPAIGN FOR RURAL LARNACA	57



What makes us unique? Introduction and context.

Rural Larnaca

The pilot site area is Rural Larnaca, which is located in Larnaca District in Cyprus; an island nation in the eastern Mediterranean Sea with a population of 888.005 (2020). The island has an open, free-market, service-based economy with some light manufacturing. The services sector, which includes the tourism sector, contributes almost 86% of GDP and employs more than 80% of the labour force. Tourism is an important factor of the island's economy, culture, and overall brand development. Every year, Cyprus welcomes more than 4 million visitors with a total revenue of 2.7 billion. Cyprus is one of the most popular European holiday destinations and it ranks in the 40th position of the most popular destinations in the world.

Rural Larnaca consists of 18 small villages with a population of around 8.000 in total. Most of the villages have less than 500 inhabitants and are villages that promote agritourism and alternative experiences, from seeing Neolithic settlements and other archaeological findings to savouring wine tasting and local delicacies and watching crafts such as lace or pottery being made in the heart of their original homes.

Beautifully compact, easily accessible, and truly authentic, Rural Larnaca is Cyprus' oldest soul with a history that dates back 10,000 years, making it the longest continually inhabited region of the island. The main city of the region, Larnaca, stretches out to the thriving rural villages and communities that have their own unique character, charm, and scenery. Away from the tourist areas, the Larnaca countryside has a diverse wealth of its own with traditional villages, narrow streets, tiny churches, remote monasteries, and scenic views. The villages surrounding Larnaca town are endowed with historical, natural, and cultural riches. These traditional settings enhance and complement a wonderful natural environment, with local character and traditional architecture. Within this environment you can experience the traditions of the village people: the simple, serene rhythms of rural life, folk customs, daily activities, and the authentic tastes of traditional cuisine; all filtered through the sense of genuine hospitality. A place which offers innumerable experiences to visitors. Each unique village provides many options for all kinds of preferences, enchanting the visitor with its majesty and nobility.

The following villages consist of the pilot area of Rural Larnaca.

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– Agioi Vavatsinias: One of the most beautiful and picturesque villages of Cyprus. The houses, many of which are traditional, appear to be climbing up the hillsides. The village is famous for its embroideries and the production of “zivania”¹. Here, many items of traditional Cypriot cuisine are prepared such as “epsima”, “palouzes”, “soutzouko”, “kiofteri” and sweet preserves. The passage of time has left behind an old winepress to remind us of this old wine-making method.

– Agios Theodoros: A scenic village of a particularly traditional character. The pretty wooden balconies, the beautiful gardens, the carved doorway stonework, the arched carved doors, lend the buildings an air of nobility. The village offers many attractions for visitors: the chapel of “Panagia Astathkion”, built in a Gothic style in the 16th century A.D. and the Venetian Watermill. The cultural development of the community is linked to the geography of the region, and this is evident to visitors once they see the sights in combination with the landscape, the mountains, the gorges, and the valley of the river “Pentaschoinos”.

– Vavatsinia: Another typical village typical of Rural Larnaca situated in a dense pine forest, at a height of 840 metres above sea level. It was founded in the era of the Arab raids and named after the eponymous trees which grew in its surroundings, referring to mulberry trees in the Cypriot dialect. The quaint restaurants and tavernas offer traditional mezze, sweet preserves and their famous “pourekia” (fried pastries filled with halloumi or anari) as a dessert.

– Vavla: It is one of the smallest in population villages of the Rural Larnaca, a village-sanctuary for people with discerning tastes who love nature, tranquillity, and a healthy climate. Steep cobbled streets, imposing houses with ceramic-tiled roofs and their gardens, wooden doors with locks which are works of art. Points of interest are the restored old well and cistern, the Chapel of “Panagia tis Agapis” and the listed schoolhouse building.

– Delikipos: It is a small village with few inhabitants situated about 5 kilometres west of Kornos village. It is a village covered in the greenery of the pine, olive, and carob trees. Especially imposing are the centennial olive trees standing like sleepless guards at Delikipos for hundreds of years. According to the Cyprus historian Florio Voustronio in the middle of the 15th century A.D., specifically in 1461, Delikipos was subject to fiefdom. It also appears on Venetian maps. Point of interest: The church of “Metamorfosis Soteris”, built in 1726, evidenced by the inscription at the main entrance of the church, a cultural monument, maintained and protected by the Department of Antiquities.

¹ The island's national drink that dates back to the 14th century when the island was under the Venetian rule and is still made in the same tradition today. It is produced by the distillation of grapes

– Kalavassos: a community with a rich ancient history, linked to important copper ore mines. The community is situated about 40km northwest of the city of Larnaca, built along the west bank of the “Vasilikos River” and it reaches the Nicosia-Limassol highway up to the ancient “Tenta” settlement. Kalavassos and its surrounding area is linked to many significant archaeological sites, which relate to all the phases of Cypriot prehistoric and historic chronological periods. It is a community loaded with history immersed in the depths of past centuries. Here the past and the present have taken root and held on for centuries, in an extraordinary relationship. Points of interest: The “Tenta” Neolithic settlement, the metal mine, the Church of “Panagia Titiotissa” built in 1892, traditional buildings, agrotourism accommodation and a unique restored village square.

– Kato Drys: a village that is described as “little Paris” by various foreign travellers and visitors. Characteristic of the village are the houses in the centre of the village built in a neoclassical style, indicating the prosperous and thriving times in the village’s history. A point of interest is the Church of “Panagia Eleousa” that dates back to the 12th century A.D.

– Kornos: The picturesque village of Kornos, known for its pottery, is built in a hilly area. It is also famous for the production of excellent quality honey. An important attraction of the village is its church built in the gothic architectural style, dedicated to Saint John the Baptist, built at the beginning of the 19th century A.D. It is worth noting that one of the icons of the honoured saint dates back to 1734.

– Kofinou: the largest village of the Rural Larnaca. Near the village is the Byzantine church of the “Panagia of Kofinou” and the monastery of the “Panagia Galaktotrofousa”. The ancient church of the “Panagia of Kofinou” is of special interest and dates back to the 11th century A.D.

– Lagia: a small scenic village in an idyllic hilly area, with an average height of 380 metres above sea level.

– Kato Lefkara: a community of rich tradition, which preserves today the ethos and the boldness of a Cyprus which is flawless and authentic, of a living heritage and of folk tradition. Places of interest are the chapels of “Archangelos Michail” (12th century A.D.), “Agios Timotheos” (15th century A.D.) and “Agia Marina” (18th century A.D.).

– Pano Lefkara: famous for its lace embroideries but also for its silversmithing. Visitors must not miss out on a visit to the Local Ethnological Museum of Traditional Embroidery and Silversmith Work, the Church of the “Timios Stavros” (Holy Cross) which dates from the 14th

century A.D. and the various chapels of the area. Lefkaritiko Embroidery is included in UNESCO's Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.

- Melini: The pretty village of Melini is another village in the region with a small population. Visitors can admire the local traditional architecture of the houses which are made of mudbricks and tour the narrow-paved streets.

- Odou: It is considered one of the most picturesque and traditional villages of Cyprus. It is built in the foothills of Troodos at 850 metres above sea level. Of significant interest is the little church of "Agia Marina" which was founded in 1777.

- Ora: The village is built amongst mountain peaks affording a panoramic view to visitors. Quaint traditional houses, narrow streets and flowering gardens complete the beauty of the village.

- Skarinou: Built on the mountain slopes, Skarinou maintains until this day its traditional character. Most of the houses are stone-built and the narrow-cobbled streets lead to areas with panoramic views. The village is famous for its various traditional products such as donkey's milk, wine, oil, carob syrup, biscuits and also the largest piece of "Lefkaritiko" lace embroidery which has won a place in the Guinness Book of World Records.

- Tochni: with its traditional buildings, is steeped in history and tradition since it is linked with Saint Helena on her visit to Cyprus from Jerusalem and on her way to Constantinople with the relic of the Holy Cross.

- Choirokitia: The picturesque village of Choirokitia is situated in a hilly region. It has become well - known due to the major archaeological discovery of a prehistoric settlement dating from the later phase of the Aceramic Neolithic period (around 7000 B.C.). In 1998 it was listed as a World Heritage Monument by UNESCO.

It is worth mentioning that the Rural Larnaca, which is also called Mountainous Area (Orini Larnaca), won the first prize in the European Destinations of Excellence EDEN VIII competition themed 'Cultural Tourism'. The European Destinations of Excellence (EDEN) Project is carried out in the framework of the European programme COSME, which is co-funded by the European Commission – Tourism Unit. It is an initiative that promotes development models of sustainable tourism across Europe and focuses on annual national competitions that lead to the selection of a tourist 'destination of excellence' for each participating Member State.

Tangible and intangible cultural heritage - including visitor hot-spots

Rural Larnaca has hundreds of years of contrasting civilizations, architecture and culture that have left their mark in the area; an area with rich tangible and intangible heritage that are included in the UNESCO and national lists, and others remain hidden for us to discover and explore. Below we can see an indicative list of the most important tangible and intangible heritage of Rural Larnaca.

Tangible Cultural Heritage

- **Choirokoitia Archaeological Site (Neolithic Settlement):** The Neolithic settlement of Choirokoitia, occupied from the 7th to the 4th millennium B.C., is one of the most important prehistoric sites in the eastern Mediterranean. The remains and finds from the excavations have thrown much light on the evolution of human society in the region. The archaeological site of Choirokoitia is a remarkably well-preserved settlement from the Neolithic Age that has been listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site since 1998. Five characteristic cylindrical shaped dwellings have been reconstructed near the settlement, using the same construction methods and materials used in Neolithic times. The dwellings are fitted with replicas of household objects found inside the originals, thus providing a vivid representation of how they appeared in antiquity. The vegetation around the dwellings consists of plant species and native trees that have grown in Cyprus since Neolithic times.
- **Kalavassos-“Tenta” Archaeological Site (Neolithic Settlement):** the Neolithic Age settlement of “Tenta” is situated a short distance from Kalavassos Village and dates to 8500-7000 BC. It is one of the most significant Neolithic settlements of the island and is covered by a characteristic cone-shaped roof, which forms a contemporary architectural intervention in the landscape. According to local tradition, the name of the site goes back to 327 AD when Saint Helena, the mother of Constantine the Great, stayed in a tent (“Tenta”) in this location during her visit to the island following the discovery of the Holy Cross in Jerusalem.

In the area you will also find many churches, chapels, and monasteries of much interest from both a religious and a historic point of view. Below is a list with the most important churches of the area.

- **“Agios Minas” Convent:** located in the village of Vavla, a convent that dates back to the 15th century. The building is a mixture of Byzantine and Gothic styles with a pointed vault of

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traverse ribs and side porticos, and consists of a church, cloisters, and other monastic buildings. On the north and south walls there are two large paintings of Saint George and Saint Minas dated in 1757. In addition to their religious duties, the nuns at the convent prepare homemade preserves and herbs which can be purchased from there.

- The Church of Saints Constantine and Helena: Located in the rural village of Tochni, the Church of The Saints Constantine and Helena is uniquely situated on a bridge in the centre of the village where under the river runs through the village. It is said that Saint Helena herself built both the bridge and the church, founding the church with a piece of the Holy Cross. A room within the church, which serves as an Ecclesiastical Museum, contains a small piece of the Holy Cross, and a small piece of the relic of Saint Helena, which are of insurmountable religious value.
- The Church of the “Timios Stavros” (Holy Cross) in Lefkara, which dates from the 14th century A.D. A special characteristic of the church is the wood-carved iconostasis which was crafted in 1760 A.D., with a secret hiding-place for the large gold-plated silver Cross which, according to folklore, contains wood from the Holy Cross. The folklore says that the Cross was brought to Pano Lefkara village by Saint Elena on her visit to Cyprus.
- Church of the “Metamorphosis of “Soteros””: (Transfiguration of Our Saviour) located in Lefkara village. It was built in the 14th century A.D. in an imposing and prominent position in the southwest of Lefkara. From the peak of “Sotira”, visitors can enjoy the amazing view which spreads out in front of them and extends towards all the points of the horizon.
- Chapel of “Archangelos Michail” (Archangel Michael) in Kato Lefkara, which was built in the 12th century A.D. A stone chapel of Byzantine style the shape of the Cross.
- Saint “Timotheos“ in Kato Lefkara, built in the 15th century A.D.
- Saint “Marina” in Odou, built in the 18th century A.D.
- The “Panagia of Kofinou” which dates from the 12th century A.D.
- The “Panagia of Astatkion” in Agios Theodoros: It is built in the Gothic architectural style and dates from the 16th century A.D. The interior of the chapel is entirely covered in frescoes.

Intangible Cultural Heritage

A unique intangible heritage enriches the tangible cultural heritage of the area. Below a list with the intangible assets of Rural Larnaca.

- Lefkara Lace: Lefkara village is home to a very special folk art, its handmade lace linens - known as “Lefkaritika”. World famous lace and a proud and prevailing tradition with invaluable cultural significance for both Rural Larnaca and Cyprus. The skilled tradition of lacemaking in Lefkara has been practised exclusively in the village since Venetian times (1489-1570 AD). The lace is made by hand in designs combining four basic elements: the hemstitch, cut work, satin stitch fillings and needlepoint edgings to form embroidered linens such as tablecloths, napkins and show pieces.
- Basketry and basket weaving: Basket-weaving with the use of wicker or reeds has been practised in Cyprus as a professional activity since the 19th century. Reed, wicker, or straw are used to weave the different types of baskets, including large “kofina”, or woven baskets used for the collection and transportation of agricultural produce as well as the linen baskets, and the baskets used by the fishermen. Coarse woven straw-mats used mainly as interior claddings in roof restorations of old houses or also used for shading or fencing called “kalamotes” and “psatharkes” are also made. The basket weaving has earned a place in the UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage List.
- Traditional Red Clay Pottery: Traditional red clay pottery was used to create red clay pots, intended for use as cooking utensils and as a means to transport, preserve and store food. The pots are entirely handmade, with the main tool being the low and slow pedal wheel on which the clay is placed, and the pots are formed. The red colour of the pots comes from the clay, which is made from local red soil mixed with water. The pottery that is produced in Kornos village varies in size and shape, depending on its use: “pitharia” (jugs used to create the soup “trachanas”; they were also used to store wine and water), “pitharouthkia” (pots to cook meat), “kouzes” (medium-shaped pots with necks, used to serve water), cooking utensils that were big and open.
- “Tsiattista” poetic duelling: The lively, impromptu oral poetry known as “Tsiattista” was inscribed in 2011 on the Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. It is often performed to the accompaniment of violin or lute in “jousts” in which one poet-singer attempts to outdo another with clever verses made up of rhyming couplets. It has long been a popular component of wedding feasts, fairs and other public celebrations, where eager crowds encourage poets to perform.
- The art of drystone: Drystone constructions in Cyprus are traditionally found in the rural landscape and in specific constructions in urban centres. Drystone building refers to the construction of buildings using stones without any binding mortar. It is associated with



practices related to the traditional country planning mainly of the rural areas, with the specific character of each area (mountainous, semi-mountainous, and coastal) and with the function of the construction. Drystone constructions are formed according to the knowledge of the properties of the rock and natural materials and the need to tackle natural phenomena. They constitute vital constructions for preventing landslides and floods, for fighting desertification and preserving biodiversity.

- **Traditional Easter Games:** Traditional Easter games constitute an important element of the cultural heritage of our country and continue to fascinate young and old in the communities where they are preserved. They reveal the way older and younger Cypriot societies used to have fun, the temperament of the inhabitants of those areas and the need people had to manifest their joy for the most important Christian Feast, that of Easter. They are usually played on Easter Sunday, Easter Monday or even Easter Tuesday after a feast lunch, usually in a village square or the church yard. In a climate of euphoria, villagers and visitors take part in traditional individual and team games which are mainly entertaining and do not lead to any material gain for the winners. Many of the traditional Easter games of Cyprus have ancient Greek and byzantine roots, thus proving the historical continuity of tradition and the significance of socialisation and of collective entertainment at important feasts and events.

Other locations of historic interest:

- The Stone Bridge in Lefkara (River “Syrkatis”)
- The Old Drinking Fountain in Lagia which dates from 1709 and was one of 12 drinking fountains in existence at the time used to provide water to the village inhabitants.
- The Venetian Watermill at Agios Theodoros

Traditions

With the passage of time and technological advancement, many professions have been lost or are carried on only by few. However, the love of certain people for upholding tradition and customs in their daily lives has contributed positively to the preservation of these traditions and has formed a link between the generations.

At Pano and Kato Lefkara villages you will find the silversmiths who work the silver in the traditional manner with the hammer (forging). Also, the “Lefkaritiko” embroidery which goes back centuries and are famous all over the world. Also, in the area and especially in the village

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of Kornos, you will find the art of pottery, which is recognised globally having received many distinctions and prizes. Finally, an art that can be found in the area is the basket-weaving which dates from ancient times, when baskets were made to serve a range of specific practical purposes from carrying agricultural produce, making cheese, and transporting wine.

Traditional products

Each place makes its own traditional products which are connected with its culture. Rural Larnaca is justifiably proud of its delicious traditional Cypriot products such as:

- ✓ Handmade pasta shaped with skewers or with the “sklinitzi” plant
- ✓ “Tertzelouthkia” (a type of pasta) with carob syrup.
- ✓ Sourdough bread and bread rolls.
- ✓ Sweet Pastries with honey and almonds.
- ✓ Sweet pastries with ground almonds.
- ✓ Pure honey.
- ✓ Dairy products (“halloumi (Cypriot cheese), “trachanas” and its famous yogurt).
- ✓ Products made from donkey’s milk.
- ✓ By-products of grapes (raisins, “soutzoukos”, “kiofteri”, “palouzes”): while raisins are made of grapes, soutzoukos”, “kiofteri” and “ palouzes”are made with grape juice.

Natural Environment

The unique natural environment of Rural Larnaka has been included in the list of protected areas of the “Natura 2000” Network. Three rivers with habitats of the utmost environmental significance flow through the region. These are the rivers “Vasilikos”, Saint “Minas” and “Pentaschoinos”. The dams on the rivers, “Vasiilikos”, “Dipotamos” and “Pentaschoinos” are the most important environmental features of the region.

The region has a wide variety of natural habitats and abundant flora. There are 600 different plants, 42 of which are indigenous to Cyprus. For this reason, the “Environmental Information Center of Larnaka Mountainous Area” at Skarinou village has been set up for the purpose of educating and informing visitors on environmental and cultural issues as well as promoting the region.

Existing development strategies and identified gaps

National Strategies

At the national level, the Deputy Ministry of Tourism, which was established in 2018, is now responsible for the coordination and implementation of the National Tourism Strategy, the promotion, and the projection of Cyprus as a tourist destination, the support of the investments in tourism, the promotion of tourist awareness, the education and training, the implementation of tourism legislation and the general supervision of the tourism industry.

The Cyprus’ ten-year tourism strategy 2020-2030, which is the road map towards turning Cyprus into a sustainable tourism destination, aims at a 30% increase in income and a rise in the number of visitors from 4 million to 5.15 million in 2030. The strategy seeks to turn Cyprus into an all-year destination with the promotion of not only the coastal areas but also the mountain regions and the countryside. Moreover, the tourism strategy focuses on restoration of the tourism growth and revenue, repositioning our tourism brand and making a strategic shift towards an enriched and diversified tourism product, able to attract more higher-spending visitors and penetrate new niche segments and markets.

The Deputy Ministry of Tourism (DMT) , aiming at the development of cultural tourism and rural tourism, offers financial support in order to improve the quality of provided services as well as to create experiences and improve the relevant villages infrastructure. One of the incentives that are given through the Cyprus Recovery and Resilience Plan is the scheme for visitable handicraft and enogastronomy workshops. The scheme offers financial support for carrying out visitable workshops regarding the field of traditional or / and modern handicraft and enogastronomy. The workshops are addressed to both Cypriot and foreign visitors and their aim is to introduce them to the tourist product of Cyprus. Visitors will have the opportunity to be toured to the workshops, watch live the crafting process and the preparation of traditional products of enogastronomy, and if they wish, take part in experiential, interactive

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activities, to acquire unique and authentic experiences. Another financial support that is provided by the DMT is for the enrichment and upgrading of the tourism product for lengthening the tourist season aiming at the development of new products and services concerning special interest tourism, supporting investments of existing hotel and tourist accommodation units for the upgrading, modernization and enrichment of their facilities and services and the modernization and enrichment of premises and facilities of establishments relating to special interest products and accommodation units.

Very recently, in July 2021, the Ministers of Energy, Commerce and Industry and Agriculture, Rural Development and Environment and the Deputy Minister of Research, Innovation and Digital Policy presented the “Cyprus Action Plan for the transition to a circular economy 2021-2027” with a budget of €90m that has been already approved by the Council of Ministers. By moving to a circular economy, there will be opportunities for the transformation of companies and industry, in order to gain more competitive advantages and become more competitive, resilient and more sustainable at a local and international level.

The “Cyprus Action Plan for the transition to a circular economy 2021-2027” is based on the following four pillars:

- 1st Pillar – Cultural change for a circular economy: It includes informing the business community and consumers about the prospects and business opportunities of a circular economy, information campaign for the sustainable management plan “Pay as you throw” and providing training on circularity issues.
- 2nd Pillar – Providing incentives for investments in a circular economy: It includes the development of a Consulting and Financial Guidance Plan of €1m (€15 thousand per company), the development of “Go Circular” Grants schemes of €1m. by the Research & Innovation Foundation for the development of new circular products and services and the utilisation of HRDA plans for training on circular economy.
- 3rd Pillar – Development of circular economy infrastructures: With a total cost of €2m, conduct a study to identify the appropriate waste streams to be declassified, create an online sharing platform that will enable companies to share equipment, services, facilities, waste, etc., and create an integrated system of supervision and monitoring of waste management projects.

- 4th Pillar – Municipal Waste Management: Development of a “Pay as you Throw” scheme (€25m), for the separate waste collection in mountainous areas, development and operation of a network of Green Recycling Points to help remote communities (€3.5m), domestic composting of organic waste (€7m), development of Product Repair and Reuse Centres (€4m), reduction and separate collection of solid waste in Limassol – Paphos (€5m) and waste recovery plan collected separately (€15m).

The Ministry of Energy, Commerce and Industry prepared the Grant Schemes and an Incentive Scheme that has been announced which will give industries the opportunity to invest in projects and practices that lead to circularity.

Regional Strategies

At the regional level, the Larnaca Tourism Board was established to promote Larnaca as a tourist destination, to improve and enrich the tourism product and to resolve any issues that may directly or indirectly affect Larnaca and its potential as a holiday destination. The Company is the official body that represents tourism in Larnaca at the regional level. It is a collaboration of all tourism stakeholders of Larnaca, including the Larnaca Chamber of Commerce and Industry (Chairman), the Deputy Ministry of Tourism, the Municipality of Larnaca and other local authorities, the local Association of Hotel Agents and Travel Agents, Larnaca and Famagusta Development Agency and the Cyprus Agritourism Company. Larnaca Tourism Board is responsible for the coordination of the actions for the implementation of the Larnaca Regional Tourism Strategy and annual action plans. All involved stakeholders work tirelessly for the upgrade and enrichment of the tourist product and services of Larnaca.

The regional body that acts as a funding organisation in the Larnaca and Famagusta Districts is Larnaca and Famagusta Districts Development Agency, both a Local Action Group (LAG) for the rural areas and a Fisheries Local Action Group (FLAG) for the fisheries area. With a total budget of 5.4 million euros coming from the two co-funded programs (Leader – CLLD) as well as from around 2 million coming from competitive European projects, the aim is to make use of this fund in order to create self-sustaining, diversified, and vibrant rural and fishing areas, that will attract people for work, habitation, and visit.

More specifically, the Measure 19 – LEADER, which is funded by the Rural Development Programme 2014-2020 through the LAG Larnaca and Famagusta Districts Development Agency,

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focuses in rural areas that are lagging in development, have significant loss of population and ageing population and face abandonment. Particular emphasis is given to areas that have emerged as diversified growth cores, based on their rich cultural heritage. Therefore, the Measure 19 Leader, with a total budget of 3.2 million Euros, focuses on grants on agrotourism such as the improvements of small agrotourism units, cottage and handicraft industries, thematic farms, retail stores associated with agricultural products, the promotion, organisation of cultural events, educational projects, cooperation activities and other.

Similar to the above, there is the Priority 4 - LEADER for fisheries areas, which provides for the financing of projects in the fisheries sector, giving emphasis on supporting small-scale coastal fishing, development of fishing areas as well as enhancement of the fishing tourism and measures regarding the marine environment. The implementation of Priority 4 from the FLAG Larnaca and Famagusta Districts Development Agency, with a total budget of 2.2 million Euros, funds projects for retail trade and fish processing, application of a quality sign for fish taverns, scheme for fishing tourism and diversification of activities, trainings, and organisation of cultural events.

Identified Gaps

During the workshops the discussions among the stakeholders identified gaps that we have in Cyprus and at the same time affected the pilot area of Rural Larnaca. This is summarised below:

“Sea and Sun” remains by far the first and most important incentive for choosing Cyprus as a tourist destination, significantly ahead of the other incentives, the so-called special interest tourism categories. On the other hand, there is significant room for improvement regarding the efforts to enrich the Cypriot tourism product with special interest tourism categories and experiences.

Another gap is that despite our good climate all year around, the tourism sector suffers from high seasonality which has been getting worse over the past decade. Most income is generated between June and September and that is a major problem for investors, entrepreneurs, and employees. This lowers attractiveness, income, and profitability for those involved in the sector.

At the same time, there is a weak performance of the tourism sector. The financial situation and profitability of many tourist businesses has arguably been weak, and investment remains somewhat low. Averages in lengths of stay, occupancy rates, and above all daily spending, especially outside of hotels, are registering negative trends. Cyprus' product and its competitiveness are both in decline.

The low level of experiential value of the offer is reinforcing what is perceived as a loss of Cypriot identity and Mediterranean personality. This leads to a lower return rate of tourists and a deterioration in Cyprus' competitiveness as a destination.

The high level of visual pollution also presents a threat to the development of tourism: the lack of cultural identity, pollution through unplanned building activity, unregulated advertising and pollution through illegal waste disposal are some examples. Similarly, noise pollution causes problems for tourism development throughout the country.

Weaknesses in air capacity is another gap. There is no national carrier actively serving the interests of the Cyprus government and enterprises. For many international airlines, traffic to Cyprus is too low to justify additional connections. New local airlines are mainly serving existing key markets and neglecting new potential markets. Also, investing in sustainable airport infrastructures for both airports (Larnaca and Paphos), that can achieve net zero emissions, embody a circular economy approach to their built assets, adopting materials passports and other measures to enable the reuse of materials when facilities reach their end of life, address biodiversity impacts and become healthier for employees, communities and users.

Planning in both urban and rural environments is lacking a central approach. This needs to follow a selected growth model, which identifies specific destinations, the speed and the type of growth that is appropriate for each of these destinations. National, regional, and local planning interest approaches often conflict in the absence of a clear nationwide tourist development plan, the results of which are often chaotically planned.

Weak industry innovation, intelligence, and technology support processes is another gap. Cyprus, like many other areas that lack research and innovation, presents a low degree of modernisation and persistent inability to adapt to worldwide trends.

Finally, the lack of stakeholder trust and collaboration is something that needs to be reinforced. Public-private collaboration is weakened by the mutual distrust and unrealistic expectations of the private sector regarding public support. The complicated relationship between national, regional, and local authorities adds to these issues.

How can cultural heritage innovations bring us to circular cultural tourism? Local co-creation process.

Since we are focusing on the circular economy, the action plan is taking into account the five circular economy principles that is rethink, innovate, revalue, reduce, and regenerate. As you can see in Figure 1 the core of the process is the stakeholders, they are the heart, the ones that have the knowledge of the area and the ones that are the vehicle for the implementation of the different actions and the ones that will ensure a sustainable tourism development for Rural Larnaca.

The first step of the process was to have a good context analysis that has been done with the collection of relevant data for our pilot area but also input that came from the stakeholders during the first local workshop (LWS). At the second LWS we focused more on the visions and goals and the main points raised for our area. Also, in the second LWS the stakeholders gave us their first ideas and solutions for the actions. The process ended with the third LWS and the Hackathon where the stakeholders deepened into the actions and the measures as well as the funding opportunities and the monitoring and assessment of the action plan.

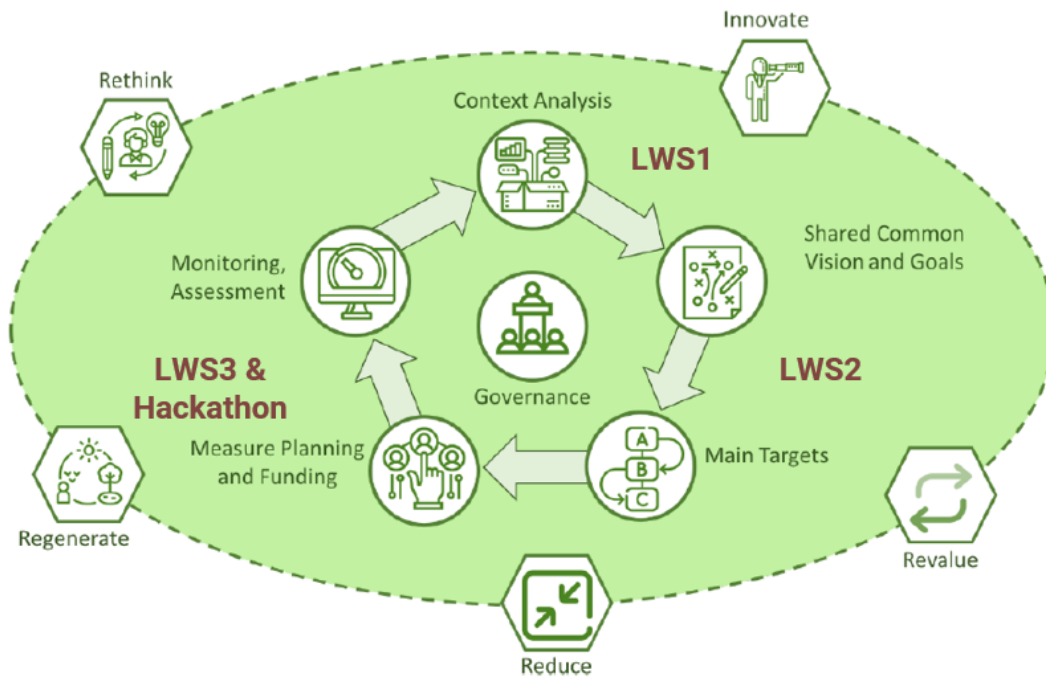


Figure 1: The Process Towards a Circular Cultural Tourism Action Plan for Rural Larnaca

Mapping of inclusive and diverse stakeholder ecosystem

As mentioned above, the stakeholders are the core of the action plan, the ones that have proposed the activities and the ones that will support their implementation. During the co-creation process a wide range of stakeholders were involved coming from different organisations and different backgrounds based on the Quadruple Helix model which involved representatives from all members of society; public authorities, industry, academia, and citizens.

Most of the stakeholder’s origin was from the Rural Larnaca but also, we had participants that live and work in other areas of Cyprus. Most of the participants knew each other since they have collaborated in the past and continue to collaborate in different projects or work together. Most of the stakeholders are from sectors connected to tourism, for example from different NGOs, SMEs that produce and sell traditional products, agrotourism units, museums, etc. Also, we had two universities and a representative from the Deputy Ministry of Tourism.

In general, the climate between the participants was very good, with good communication and collaboration and they worked very well in the different groups. All of them participated in the

discussions and gave their opinion, feedback, and ideas. They were very active and enthusiastic and that resulted in a lot of ideas and actions for the Rural Larnaca action plan which they will support for its implementation.

Below we can see a diagram and a table containing the different types of stakeholders that participated in the co-creation process of the action plan for Rural Larnaca. In the diagram we can see the relevant types of stakeholders coming from the different levels, that is from the area, the district and from national level. Most of them are coming from the pilot area but as well we have good representation from the district and the national level. Considering that Cyprus has no regions, and all development planning is done at a national level this is very important for the process of developing the action plan.

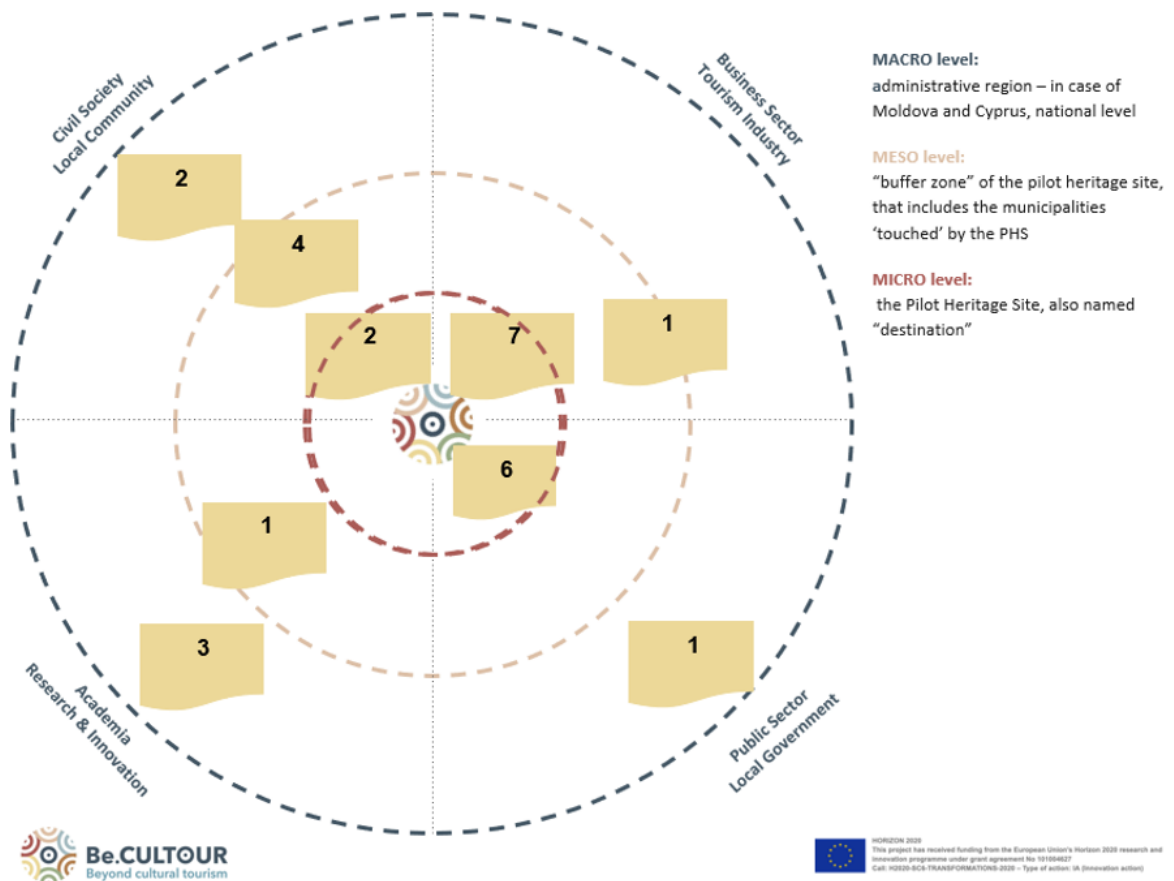


Figure 1: The Stakeholder Mapping

Table 1: Type of Stakeholders

Organisation	Level (Macro/meso/micro)	Sector
National Authorities		
Cyprus Deputy Ministry of Tourism	Macro	Public sector
Local Authorities		
Community Council of Agios Theodoros	Micro	Local community
Community Council of Odou	Micro	Local community
Community Council of Kalavassos	Micro	Local community
Community Council of Vavla	Micro	Local community
Community Council Kato Drys	Micro	Local community
Community Council Tochni	Micro	Local community
Academia		
Cyprus University of Technology	Macro	Academia/Research and Innovation
UCLan Cyprus	Macro	Academia/Research and Innovation
UCY	Macro	Academia/Research and Innovation
Lefkara School	Meso	Academia/Research and Innovation
Business Sector		
Charalambos Holiday Cottage	Micro	Business sector/Tourism industry
Paradisiotis Ltd (SME)	Meso	Business sector
Traditional products maker	Micro	Business sector/Tourism industry
Oros maxaira (SME)	Micro	Business sector/Tourism industry
Garden Kamara House, Kato drys and Bee and Embroidery Museum, Kato drys	Micro	Business sector/Tourism industry
Ermi Traditional Sweets (SME)	Micro	Business sector/Tourism industry
Ktima Christoudia (Winery)-SME	Micro	Business sector/Tourism industry
Cyprus Vegan Guide	Micro	Business sector/Tourism industry
Civil Society		
Women Association of Rural Larnaka	Micro	Civil Society
RIK (Journalist)	Macro	Media
Phoenix	Micro	Civil Society
Alpha Cyprus	Macro	Media
Journalist (Apopsi-La)	Meso	Media
Pro Women	Meso	Civil Society
Freelance tourist guide	Meso	Tourism Industry
Metropolis of Trimithountas	Meso	Civil Society

Odou Youth Centre	Micro	Civil society/Local community
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Mapping of recognized and hidden assets

As it was mentioned above, the Rural Larnaca is an area with rich culture and history that dates back more than 10000 years. All the civilizations that pass from the area left their mark and that is what makes Rural Larnaca an interesting area to explore. Many of Rural Larnaca' s cultural assets remain hidden, known only by the older locals and face abandonment and desertification. The history, myths and stories that accompany these hidden assets are only passed from mouth to mouth and there is not any documentation. A mapping and a recording of the different hidden assets of the Rural Larnaca has been done during the first workshop. The most important hidden assets are the following:

The abandoned settlements of "Drapia and Parsata"

The village of "Drapia" is a mediaeval village located northwest of Kalavassos, on the east bank of the "Vassilikos" River. It was abandoned in the early 19th century, as a result of the closure of the Kalavassos mines, which provided employment for the villagers. Adjoining "Drapia", is another abandoned settlement, "Parsata", which also relied on the Kalavassos mines for employment, and was dissolved at a similar time as "Drapia". The village also has remains of typical stone-built houses, with wooden doors and roofs of various materials, in addition to its charming countryside views. The two small "villages" have a common predestination and a largely common history. They were built for the same reason and were abandoned for the same reason too. In the ancient years, humans dug and found many precious metals in the mountains surrounding Kalavassos. They created many mines and miners from different areas of Cyprus coming from as far as Paphos, arrived in Kalavassos looking for a job.

The two settlements could be two "live" community cells of our society. A plan for the reconstruction of the two settlements is needed to put into place based on their original architectural basis. With this way we can show to visitors the old houses, the way of living and promote the history of the area on the mining and miners and the importance it had for the area and the mark that it left.

The old forger of Ora

The blacksmith is a metalsmith who creates objects primarily from wrought iron or steel, but sometimes from other metals, by forging the metal, using tools to hammer, bend, and cut. With their acquired skills and experience accumulated while working with metal, local craftsmen — blacksmiths, tinsmiths, and coppersmiths, for centuries had served the everyday needs of the population's different classes, passed on, from generation to generation, the secrets, and skills of metal processing. Today, Cyprus takes pride in this legacy and attempts to preserve it, striving to develop this ancient tradition in the conditions of the modern material world. The old forge of Ora could be an opportunity to preserve this traditional occupation, developing education tourism and at the same time experience tourism.

House of "Manos Loizou" in Agioi Vavatsinias

Agioi Vavatsinias, a small, beautiful village whose houses are perched on the slopes of the brown fiery hills. Today it has around 80 permanent residents. At the village, there is the house of "Manos Loizos", a composer of Cypriot origin who is considered one of the most important artistic presences in the field of modern Greek music. He wrote songs in various styles. The community, wanting to honour this great composer, wants to preserve its house and make it visitable.

Mine and train tracks in Kalavassos

Located 6km northwest of Kalavassos are the mines. These mines have assisted in the employment of many people during its operation. The area of Kalavassos had many advantages due to the river Vasilikos which ensured the irrigation and water supply as well as the metal deposits of the area. The Kalavassos mines offered work to the agricultural population of the nearby villages, and they assisted in bringing large amounts foreign currency to Cyprus. The mining activity was important for the economy of Cyprus. Today the mines remained closed and abandoned. The community of Kalavassos wants to maintain the mines in such a way that visitors can see the excavations as they used to be done in the old years. An opportunity for the visitor to experience tourism activity.

Watermills of Kalavassos

In the “Kotsines” location of the village of Kalavassos and very close to the archaeological site “Tenda” there is one of the water mills, one of those that the farmers of the village had built in the centuries that have passed. The entrance cistern, the huge funnel, the ground floor room where the millstones were, as well as the auxiliary rooms for waiting and hosting the mill's visitors, are built with local stone.

Skarinou Station

In the early 1900s, when Cypriot merchants, travellers, pilgrims, and those who simply wanted to go to Limassol and Paphos, passed through the place where there was a small bridge over the river “Pentashinos”. A progressive resident of Skarinou noticed that travellers were stopping for water and to feed their animals. So, he thought and started offering various services to the travellers. Over the years, more and more people passed through that part of the river and the estates and the mansions they built under towering trees were established as Stations.

The art of dry stones building

Buildings - retaining walls that resulted from the stoning of the fields, stone-paved pavements that formed the paths in the settlements and the connection between them, the paths and accesses to the fields, threshing floors for sorting and grinding cereals and pulses, water management systems for pumping, networking and channelling the water in the cultivation, in the water-powered flour mill, in the cistern, in the pasture, in the field, in the residence, in the sheds, huts and corrals for temporary accommodation and protection from weather conditions and farmers and for keeping their livestock. The contribution of drystone building practices to the maintenance of an alternative mode of social and rural organisation was significant and their construction process, which required coordination and collective work, contributed to the social cohesion of local communities.

Saint Athanasios “Pentashchinitis”

Several years ago, the settlement of Agios Theodoros was located in the “Pentashchinos” area, a short distance from the sea. Saint Athanasios was born and lived there. He got the name “Pentashchinitis” because he lived in that area. The chapel dates back to the 7th century and was built over the tomb of the Saint. From its ruins it appears to have been a magnificent temple.

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The Saint's tomb as well as another tomb, said to belong to his father, were discovered in 2004 after excavations.

This is not an exhaustive list. More assets of the area exist and as an action of the local action plan is the creation of a database that will map and record all the hidden assets and their history in order to be preserved and passed to the next generations.

Mapping of specific heritage and cultural tourism-related challenges

The area of Rural Larnaca faces a lot of challenges. The first challenge is the high seasonality, with the tourist period to be between the months of May and September and the peak season between June-August. That puts an excessive pressure on vital local resources, such as water, energy, and wildlife. We are facing the overconsumption of water, electricity, and other utilities that put pressure on the area's natural resources. Therefore, there is a need to promote the sustainable use of resources to ensure tourism doesn't deplete the resources that people, animals, and the industry itself rely on.

The high seasonality creates another challenge, the overexploitation of high-demand areas. Rural Larnaca faces the phenomenon of the over-exploitation of natural resources that harms the health of ecosystems and the wellbeing of people. In the face of environmental crises and growing inequality, we need to act, including developing extended producer responsibility and supply chain legislation, guaranteeing green public procurement, supporting technical innovation to enhance resource circularity, and adopting decision-making processes that include and respect women, indigenous peoples, and local communities.

Thirdly, as an identified challenge we should mention the lack of a database of cultural monuments and natural heritage sites, especially the hidden treasures of our area. The area of Rural Larnaca has a long history of different civilizations that left their mark in the area, however there is not any formal exhaustive list of cultural monuments other than those listed as antiquities class A (public) and class B (private ownership). The lack of a formal exhaustive list of cultural monuments of cultural heritage (both private and public) causes a huge problem in terms of providing the relevant services to all stakeholders and the wider interested audience. There is a great necessity for a unified database and portal with regards to the implementation of international standards in the field of cultural heritage management and ensuring access to information on cultural heritage, which, in turn, promotes raising public

awareness but at the same time ensures the dissemination of knowledge and continuation of our customs, traditions and history.

While Rural Larnaca has many cultural elements to show the level of visibility and accessibility is rather low. Many of the hidden elements do not have the relevant specifications so they can be visited and there is an urgent need of relevant renovations so they can be preserved. There is the risk of no respect to the landscape and correct restoration practices to ensure the protection of the integrity and authenticity of the sites.

Another challenge that is faced in regard to the hidden but also unhidden cultural assets of the area, is their limited promotion and visibility. Most of them are only known by the locals and are not promoted so they can be known to local and foreign tourists. Also, there is not any signage to guide you to these assets or any information or an official tourism website where relevant information can be found.

The fact that many villages are currently of little or no interest to international tourists mainly due to visual pollution is another challenge we need to face and improve. The vision of a cleaner, more authentic, and aesthetic cultural site shall be developed, encompassing four different categories: outdoor signage and advertising, pollution, land use and protection, and architecture.

The limited level of collaboration and networking and the absence of synergies of the different stakeholders in the area it's something we all need to work on improving. Many destinations have attempted to move toward sustainability, but unfortunately, have been hindered in their attempts by a lack of collaboration among stakeholders that is necessary to support their sustainability agendas. Collaboration, specifically through multi-stakeholder partnerships, has been seen as an effective way to support initiatives in tourism development.

A major challenge that is faced is the low level of experiential offer. Tourists expect more and more to be able to book and live meaningful, unique, and authentic experiences during their travels. They seek experiences they will never forget and can be shared with others, and they are willing to pay for them. Even though the area has a lot of cultural assets (tangible and intangible), rich traditions, arts and crafts and gastronomy that are the basis for offering a variety of natural and cultural sights and activities, the experiential level that is offered is currently very low. As a consequence, the resulting value generation for both tourists and local

businesses is deficient and the differentiation of Rural Larnaca within the marketplace is rather weak.

Further, the pilot area suffers from a low level of digitalization, innovation, and skills. Digitalisation provides the tools, frameworks, and technologies to create and/or add value to tourism products and experiences but the success of digitalisation depends on the capacity of the tourism sector to share, learn, and collaborate. What is missing in our area is the lack of skills of the SMEs, the necessary technical resources in their workforce to fully realise digital potentials and develop digital technologies in tourism.

The fact that there is a limited absorption of available funding is reinforcing the above-mentioned challenges. Although both national and EU funding opportunities are available, improvement is required for the identification of the available funding opportunities that match the project requirements and can be utilised to the maximum.

Involvement of the Community in Actions

The overall goal of the action planning is also to increase our community's ability to work together to affect conditions and outcomes that matter to the local residents—and to do so both over time and across issues of interest. Proper planning of any initiative is critical for yielding the best results or outcomes possible. The proposed action plan is the outcome of a significant investment of time and energy of the different stakeholders. It is the outcome of a richness of diverse views represented within our stakeholder group who worked in a collaborative way in order to achieve the best outcome for the Rural Larnaca.

What was important during the co-creation process is to make them understand that the local community should be the main actors not only preparing the action plan but also implementing the action plan.

All the actions proposed involve a wide range of stakeholders that play a key role in the Rural Larnaca. Also, there is the consensus from all and all have been engaged and have a role in implementing the different actions. To ensure the involvement of the community but moreover to ensure that the action plan will be implemented we have a specific action that is the creation of a Tourism Living Lab in the area. With the aim to have a systematic co-creation approach that brings together business, academia, and all relevant stakeholders of the rural

Larnaca in an effort to enhance collaboration and engage all stakeholders to assess new ideas and innovative concepts and continue the work that has been initiated with the Be.Cultour workshops.

To also enhance the involvement of the community in the action we will set up a communication process within all sectors of the local community. Continue to hold planning group meetings and additional public forum meetings, making sure to publicise these appropriately via local newspapers, email, social media. Communicate with all relevant audiences and let them know on the process as well giving them the opportunity of giving feedback.

Meaning and value of local cultural heritage Actions for European history and culture

Europe's cultural heritage is a rich and diverse mosaic of cultural and creative expressions, an inheritance from previous generations of Europeans and a legacy for those to come. It includes natural, built, and archaeological sites, museums, monuments, artworks, historic cities, literary, musical, and audio-visual works, and the knowledge, practices and traditions of European citizens.

Cultural heritage enriches the individual lives of citizens, is a driving force for the cultural and creative sectors and plays a role in creating and enhancing Europe's social capital. It is also an important resource for economic growth, employment, and social cohesion, offering the potential to revitalise urban and rural areas and promote sustainable tourism.

During the design of the action plan the cultural heritage as a shared resource, raising awareness of common history and values, and reinforcing a sense of belonging to a common European cultural and political space has been considered. In particular, the co-creation process for the action took into account the following:

- ✓ Participation and access for all,
- ✓ Smart solutions for a cohesive and sustainable future,
- ✓ Safeguarding and protecting cultural heritage,
- ✓ Mobilising knowledge and research,
- ✓ Reinforcing collaboration and synergies.

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Discovering the “beyond” in circular cultural tourism: how Actions address other economic sectors and residents’ needs.

Tourism is an essential contributor to economic growth, social and cultural development. Cyprus is now an established tourist destination, however the pandemic as well as new tourism trends and preferences brought a new situation. The current tourism trends and preferences include forms of tourism that focus on avoiding overcrowding, green tourism, the combination of work and travel, immersive experiences, engagement with the local community and more.

These trends were aligned with the Action Plan which has foreseen the need to invest in the upgrade and enrichment of the tourism product and to diversify the offer by creating local and cultural experiences. What is being addressed is the impact of the action plan on the sustainability and quality of life of the local population. The aim is not only to attract visitors but at the same time to attract investments in the pilot area, especially for infrastructure projects which will benefit tourism development as much as other sectors of the economy. Investments in creating and improving facilities, infrastructure, environment, etc., that will have a direct impact on the demand growth but as well will improve the quality of the life of the local residents. The local quality of life increases when three things are achieved at once: greater wealth, a greater sense of well-being and their capacity to continue generating these two elements in future is preserved.

The Action Plan also put the basis to generate the necessary stakeholder consensus and support around cultural tourism development and management. In this sense, the action proposed are capable offering positive value for all parties involved: i) for the local population, who must see their quality of life and confidence in the future improved (not worsened) through tourism, ii) for investors, who should be offered attractive and sustainable investment opportunities with minimum barriers and iii) the tourists, to whom Rural Larnaca should offer an exceptional tourism experience and excellent service. The tourism activity should also contribute to the preservation and enhancement of the natural and cultural heritage for future generations.

At the same time, one aspect that we should take into account is the contribution of tourism in employment. Direct employment in the tourism industry (accommodation and other tourism related activities) as well as indirect employment that is generated by the tourism sector in

other sectors of the economy, following the additional production from suppliers (which allow the tourism industry to provide the required goods and services).

Another important aspect that we should take into consideration is the upstream and downstream links of tourism with other sectors of the economy, especially transportation, trade and construction, providers of personal and professional services, and other relevant sub-sectors not included in the Hotels and Restaurants sector. The trickle-down effect in other sectors is known as the multiplier effect: an initial injection of direct tourism expenditure into tourism-related sectors leads to successive expenditure cycles throughout the economy that exponentially increase the direct expenditure's contribution. The tourism multiplier plays a crucial role in converting tourism expenditure into tourism production, revealing the impact that tourism expenditure has over other sectors of the economy.

Thus, it is expected that the effects of tourism growth resulting from the implementation of the action plan that focuses on circular cultural tourism will change the current volume and weight of other economic sectors. Properly implemented, the Action Plan, will create not only additional income for the tourism sector of the Rural Larnaca but additional income for the rest of the sector of the area that are connected with.

Why will our Action Plan be sustainable? Monitoring and evaluation.

A central monitoring system of the action plan will be launched to provide relevant quantitative and qualitative information and intelligence in a user-friendly way, ensuring both public and private sector decision-making is based on sound knowledge.

Based on this, a Monitoring Committee will be set up that will be responsible for planning and monitoring the implementation of the Action Plan. Monitoring the action plan will help us to ensure that the actions are being implemented as expected and act proactively in the case any changes are needed to the actions. At the same time, we should evaluate the actions and see whether their implementation brought the expected results.

The Monitoring Committee consists of the following organisations:

- Deputy Ministry of Tourism
- Larnaka Tourism Board

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IA (Innovation action)



- Larnaca and Famagusta Districts Development Agency
- Cyprus University of Technology
- Women Association of Rural Larnaka
- Metropolis of “Trimithountas”

The Monitoring Committee will meet every three months to assess the progress of the action implementation and if necessary to take any additional measures or make relevant changes if necessary.

Action Plan: Overview of actions, sub-actions and innovative solutions

Based on the workshops and discussions and the different interviews with the stakeholders, we have developed the mission and vision statements below, which we feel reasonably represent the feelings of the stakeholders involved in the planning process.

Mission Statement

Offer memorable tourism experiences based on the local rich culture and heritage and at the same time improve the quality of life of the local people. The Mission has two priorities:

- Offering memorable experiences for the international and national tourists,
- Ensuring that tourism will improve the quality of life of the local population while preserving their local identities and inspiring greater confidence in their future.

Vision

«Rural Larnaca: An Environmentally Conscious Destination, a Digital Destination that Offers Memorable Cultural Experiences and Improves the Quality of Life of Local Residents»

Specific Objectives

SO1: Promote Rural Larnaca as a sustainable and circular economy destination

SO2: Deliver an exceptional tourism experience

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SO3: Develop and promote innovative methods for revolutionising interest in our cultural sites (hidden and unhidden)

SO4: Strengthen dialogue, collaboration and create synergies

SO5: Benefit the local society and the environment

SO6: Enhance funding and private investments

Below you can see the relations between the specific objectives and the different actions and innovative solutions. All the actions are covering more than one specific objective.



Action 1: Create a Green – Circular Community Programme

As we plan for the future, green spaces need to become a priority, coinciding with a greater focus on encouraging a circular economy and the improvement of the well-being not only of the residents as well as the visitors of our pilot area. Access to nature is set to become higher up on the list of planning and local authority requirements. A green community will implement environmentally friendly practices to meet the needs of its members (e.g., conservation of water, land, energy, and nonrenewable resources, including maximum feasible reduction, recovery, and reuse and recycling of waste). Moreover, a green community will use prevention strategies and appropriate technology to minimise pollution emission and will be a great example for other regions as well.

Sub-action 1.1: Create a Consumeless Label

Create a label for tourism businesses and local authorities that implement specific ecological energy, water, and waste management measures. The label will be named Consumeless Label. Also, the tourism business and authorities that will get the accreditation of the label will be promoted through the interactive map (see Sub-Action 4.3) platform. A specific section will be created for the Consumeless tourism business and local authorities that will describe their sustainability efforts.

The label is assigned to private or public operators (tourist service providers) and local authorities which apply specific energy, water, and waste sustainable management actions in their activities, offering to tourists a choice of services able to minimise the consumption of water and energy and the generation of waste and to better know and appreciate local products during their stay.

A Local Committee will be created having the following commitments:

- Cooperate in defining the contents and the management criteria for the label,
- Coordinate and provide technical support on the implementation of the label ensuring the correct implementation of the rules of the label,
- Assign the label to establishments and local authorities,
- Provide to the awarded establishments the communication materials of the label,
- Promote the label and the establishments and local authorities awarded by organising training courses and setting up a help desk activities,
- Monitor the application of the label's criteria and of the results reached
- Realise on site audits for verifying the correct implementation of the label

When: start date and end date:	1/10/2022 – on going
Be.CULTOUR innovation area(s):	Rural Co-Living
Identified local challenge(s):	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Low level of sustainability and adaptation to circular economy principles,• Negative impacts on the destination's image

Cultural heritage asset(s):	N/A
Target group(s):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Tourism Business: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Hotels and accommodation – Camping sites – Cafes and restaurants – Food and handicraft shops – Beach resorts ● Local Authorities
Responsible stakeholder(s):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Larnaca Tourism Board – BoD members ● Larnaca and Famagusta Districts Development Agency
Collaborator(s):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Cyprus University of Technology ● Interreg Med project Consumeless plus
Raw budget estimation:	N/A. The label is ready. It has been pilot tested in the area during the implementation of the Consumeless plus project and the relevant improvements have been ready. The label is ready for implementation.
Funding source (European, National, local funds):	European – Interreg Med Programme
Other resources needed:	A Committee that will be created for the accrediting and monitoring of the label
Indicator(s) for success (also considering circularity, diversity, and inclusion):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Number of tourism business that have accredited with the Consumeless Label ● Number of local authorities that have been accredited with the Consumeless label
Hackathon? Yes or no	No

Sub-action 1.2: Create a sustainable indicators system for measuring the sustainability of the destination

The aim of the action is to set up an observation and monitoring system for tourism data in order to measure the sustainability of tourism activities and their economic and environmental outcomes and impacts as well as the carrying capacity of the area. The action includes the development of a system of indicators that will gather data with the purpose to help the local authorities and the policy makers to monitor social, environmental, and economic impacts of tourism. Also, data will be collected in order to estimate the carrying capacity of the area in order to be able to determine and achieve the “best” compromise between continuous increase of tourism flow and the effects concerning the decline of population, changes in tradition, changes in community cohesion, pollution, congestion, and other negative impacts on residents.

The system of indicators will be based on a traffic light system (green, yellow, red). The thresholds will be set on the basis of traffic light:

- o Red: 0-33% - low
- o Yellow: 34-66% - regular
- o Green: 67-100% - high

When: start date and end date:	1/01/2023 – on going (sustainability indicators to be collected every year)
Be.CULTOUR innovation area(s):	Rural Co-Living
Identified local challenge(s):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Low level of sustainability and adaptation to circular economy principles, ● Negative impacts on the destination’s image
Cultural heritage asset(s):	All cultural heritages sites of the area (for measuring their carrying capacity)
Target group(s):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Local authorities of the area
Responsible stakeholder(s):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Larnaca and Famagusta Districts Development Agency

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cyprus University of Technology
Collaborator(s):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Larnaca Tourism Board • Deputy Ministry of Tourism
Raw budget estimation:	€5,000
Funding source (European, National, local funds):	European – Interreg Med Programme
Other resources needed:	Collaboration with local authorities for collection of relevant data
Indicator(s) for success (also considering circularity, diversity, and inclusion):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More than 50% of the indicators are above the average value (that is the yellow in the traffic light system)
Hackathon? Yes or no	No

Action 2: Create Authentic Experiences based on the Rich Cultural Heritage of Rural Larnaca

Rural Larnaca has a long, colourful, and rich history. Hundreds of years of contrasting civilisations, architecture and culture have left their mark on what has always been one of Cyprus' most important and diverse regions. Each village is known for its traditional handicrafts or pastimes with generations of the skilled artisans proudly continuing the local customs. Also, the villages have a very rich cultural heritage, hidden and unhidden, tangible and intangible. All these characteristics make it ideal to develop authentic experiences that travels you through Rural Larnaca' s areas. The creation of authentic experiences will bring visitors (foreigners and locals) close to Cypriot nature and will give the opportunity to familiarise with local traditions and to experience the Cypriot way of life.

Sub-action 2.1: Larnaca Renaissance Festival

The Renaissance Festival is a large and fun fair, where visitors will come not just to see performances, they will be part of the fair itself. A city will be built around the Watchtower², a city of tents, cloth dividers, bamboo screens, plywood palaces, with pathways meandering through this city, leading to eateries, taverns, working shops of potters, ironworkers, weavers, thatchers and basket-makers, distillers, hat-makers, clothiers, and others who were the lifeblood of such a city.

As visitors wonder through the city they will be accosted by beggars, hailed by guards, attend to various proclamations. They will meet Queen “Ekaterina Cornaro”, chat with “Leontios Makhairas” discuss the plight of the Cypriot farmers with “Re Alexis” and listen to “Vintsenzo Cornaro” work on his ballads of “Erotokritos”. Minstrels will sing at street corners, “piitarides” (traditional Cypriot epic street poets) will chant and magicians will entertain. Traditional story-telling areas will be set up, a quiet corner where a chess master will take on all comers, and a straw-bales amphitheatre that will play Othello (in turns in Greek, English and Russian (if possible)). Outside the city there will be donkey and camel rides in the near countryside, and should we generate enough interest with European and American fans of such events, there will be a jousting area.

Depending on local response to a call to participate among expats in Cyprus (Chinese, Indians, Russians, etc.) the city will include sections (tents) of “meanwhile in China”, “meanwhile in India”, “meanwhile in the Middle east”, “meanwhile in Russia”.

When: start date and end date:	1/01/2023 – 31/12/2023 (The aim is to become a yearly festival)
Be.CULTOUR innovation area(s):	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sensorial Heritage Experience• Nature as heritage• Contemporary Meaning of Heritage

² Each year the festival will be in a different watchtower. In the area we have the Venetian Network of Watchtowers that is Alaminos Watchtower, Pervolia Watchtower (“Rigena”), Pyla Watchtower and Xylophagou Watchtower.

Identified local challenge(s):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visibility / Accessibility of hidden but also unhidden cultural elements ⇒ risk of overexploitation of assets and no respect to the landscape and correct restoration practices • Limited Promotion of the area: the area is mostly known by the locals and there is absence of official tourist information • Low level of experiential offer • Overexploitation of High-Demand Areas
Cultural heritage asset(s):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hidden and unhidden cultural heritage sites of the area • Intangible cultural heritage
Target group(s):	Foreigner and local visitors
Responsible stakeholder(s):	Women's Association of Rural Larnaca
Collaborator(s):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Community where the festival will be organised
Raw budget estimation:	€30000
Funding source (European, National, local funds):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leader of Rural Areas of Larnaca and Famagusta Districts – Rural Development Program • National Funds – Deputy Ministry of Tourism
Other resources needed:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volunteers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indicator(s) for success (also considering circularity, diversity, and inclusion): 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of participants • Education and awareness raising • Media presence (for example event check in, social media mentions, articles in press). • Satisfaction survey level • Volunteers' participation • Sponsorship satisfaction

Hackathon? Yes or no	Yes
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Sub-action 2.2: Needle Festivals

Year-round festivals with the mission to discover and explore Cypriot identity through cultural, entrepreneurial and sports activities. While embracing the rural landscape, the festivals will disrupt the status quo as social opportunity spaces for participants, to explore and elaborate on Cypriot identity: how it appears in daily life, sound, taste, and aesthetic through sensorial experiences and emerging relationships.

The seasonal thematic events will aim at building a tight-knit community from the bottom up, by connecting artists, entrepreneurs, traditional businesses, the elderly, and athletes. Through a holistic experience that will include artisan workshops, nature exploration activities, camping, art exhibitions, music festivals and many more.

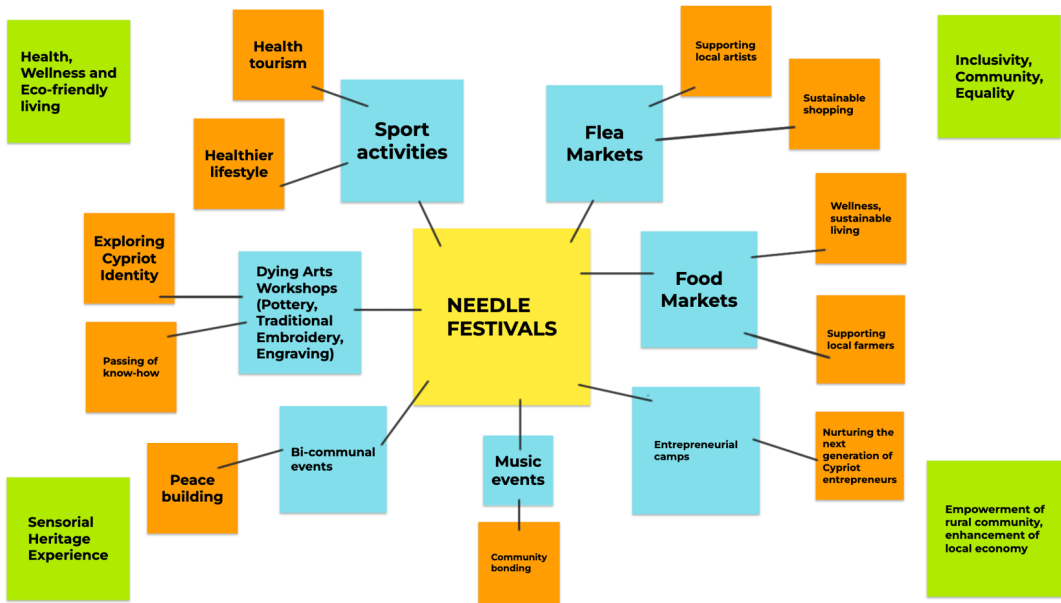


Figure 2: The Idea of the Needle Festival

The festivals will provide an environment for questioning, observing, networking, and experimenting and its driving force will be a creative community that will bring people together

to explore and embrace their roots, traditions, and history. Territorial innovation in this case can be achieved by bringing the society together, mixing the boundaries of arts, culture, sports and business fields for social interaction and ideation.

Needle Festivals will therefore facilitate a learning experience that will be based on connecting diverse people with nature through fun and play activities to celebrate learning and knowledge transfer in a safe environment. The mission is to expand the serendipity field of the area by creating social opportunistic spaces and by creating connections and networking of the area.

When: start date and end date:	1/01/2023 – 31/12/2023
Be.CULTOUR innovation area(s):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Sensorial Heritage Experience ● Nature as heritage ● Contemporary Meaning of Heritage
Identified local challenge(s):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Visibility / Accessibility of hidden but also unhidden cultural elements ⇒ risk of overexploitation of assets and no respect to the landscape and correct restoration practices ● Limited Promotion of the area: the area is mostly known by the locals and there is absence of official tourist information ● Low level of experiential offer ● Overexploitation of High-Demand Areas
Cultural heritage asset(s):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Intangible cultural heritage ● Arts, Sciences and Sports
Target group(s):	Foreigner and local visitors to the area
Responsible stakeholder(s):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Local Community of Pervolia
Collaborator(s):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Local Community of Pervolia ● Youth Club of Pervolia
Raw budget estimation:	€10000

Funding source (European, National, local funds):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leader of Rural Areas of Larnaca and Famagusta Districts – Rural Development Program • National Funds – Deputy Ministry of Tourism
Other resources needed:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volunteers
Indicator(s) for success (also considering circularity, diversity, and inclusion):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of participants • Education and awareness raising • Media presence (for example event check in, social media mentions, articles in press). • Satisfaction survey level • Volunteers' participation • Sponsorship satisfaction
Hackathon? Yes or no	Yes

Sub-action 2.3: Sensory Bee Nature Trail

The Sensory Bee Nature Trail will add value to a nature path which is rarely used due to the lack of differentiation with other paths. Its unique theme will become a point of attraction and education about the importance of Bees but also relaxation and well-being as the humming of Bees will be heard everywhere in the path.

Technology will be used as well as traditional tools for awareness about the life of bees on their journeys, and bee plants will be planted in addition to the existing wild species, with interactive explanations about their healing properties and contribution to the quality of the life of Bees and the quality of the Beehive products. Bee hotels will be created reusing natural components and water fountains will be installed with solar collectors, as water is a source of life for the pollinators and source of relaxation for the mind.

Intervention to the environment will be minimal, clippings of the trees will be used for the creation of Bee Hotels along the trail, the existing water sources will be used for the fountains, where the history of the trail, as the place where ladies were washing their clothes in old times, will be heard with the use of digital tools.

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Call: H2020-SC6-TRANSFORMATIONS-2020 – Type of action: IA (Innovation action)



The sensory trail will aid in the regeneration of a picturesque village, which has very few citizens in their 80's with amazing knowledge which is in threat of being lost, and few young keepers who are trying to survive in a remote village. The project will be aligned with all the efforts of branding the area as the Honey Routes and will attract youth and children due to the digital tools which will be used.

When: start date and end date:	1/01/2023 – 30/06/2024
Be.CULTOUR innovation area(s):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sensorial Heritage Experience • Nature as heritage
Identified local challenge(s):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visibility / Accessibility of hidden but also unhidden cultural elements ⇒ risk of overexploitation of assets and no respect to the landscape and correct restoration practices • Limited Promotion of the area: the area is mostly known by the locals and there is absence of official tourist information • Low level of experiential offer • Overexploitation of High-Demand Areas
Cultural heritage asset(s):	Village of Vavla but also the 9 local communities of the Honey Routes, adding value to the Honey routes and all the activities that take place in the area.
Target group(s):	Foreigner and local visitors to the area
Responsible stakeholder(s):	Troodos Network of Thematic Centres
Collaborator(s):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vavla Community Council • Larnaca Tourism Board
Raw budget estimation:	€25000
Funding source (European, National, local funds):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leader of Rural Areas of Larnaca and Famagusta Districts – Rural Development Program
Other resources needed:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volunteers

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Call: H2020-SC6-TRANSFORMATIONS-2020 – Type of action: IA (Innovation action)



Indicator(s) for success (also considering circularity, diversity, and inclusion):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Number of participants ● Education and awareness raising (posts in social media, articles, etc)
Hackathon? Yes or no	Yes

Sub-action 2.4: Tours with Locals

Tours with locals is an idea of envisioning a world with no mass tourism, but personalised travelling and experience. While tourists are flocking to the city centres and hotspots, locals are drawn away to avoid the crowds, and enjoy their local life. This is where Tours with Locals comes in.

The aim of the action is to connect people with cultures by breaking down barriers between travellers and locals. With this in mind, the locals will be trained to become local tour guides and be able to share authentic experiences with the visitors, taking them to the hidden gems of the villages, on amazing adventures that they will not find elsewhere. The local hosts are one of a kind, sharing their own experiences for each village and connecting with the visitors. The local tourists' guides will be offering unique, personal, and authentic local experiences offering the visitors a unique way to experience the culture and lifestyle of the rural Larnaca.

The action included the following sub-actions:

- Creation of a training course for local tour guides
- Creating a platform to serve as a marketplace which facilitates the connection between travellers and local hosts.

When: start date and end date:	1/01/2023 – 31/12/2024
Be.CULTOUR innovation area(s):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Sensorial Heritage Experience ● Nature as heritage ● Transformative Travel ● Post Cultural Tourism

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Call: H2020-SC6-TRANSFORMATIONS-2020 – Type of action: IA (Innovation action)



Identified local challenge(s):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visibility / Accessibility of hidden but also unhidden cultural elements ⇒ risk of overexploitation of assets and no respect to the landscape and correct restoration practices • Limited Promotion of the area: the area is mostly known by the locals and there is absence of official tourist information • Low level of experiential offer • Overexploitation of High-Demand Areas
Cultural heritage asset(s):	All tangible and intangible cultural assets
Target group(s):	Foreigner and local visitors to the area
Responsible stakeholder(s):	Larnaca and Famagusta Districts Development Agency
Collaborator(s):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Larnaca Tourism Board • Women’s Association of Rural Larnaca • UCLAN University
Raw budget estimation:	€60000
Funding source (European, National, local funds):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leader of Rural Areas of Larnaca and Famagusta Districts – Rural Development Program
Other resources needed:	N/A
Indicator(s) for success (also considering circularity, diversity, and inclusion):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of locals trained and accredited as tourist guides • Number visitors that are hosted by a local tour guide
Hackathon? Yes or no	No

Action 3: Create a Living Lab

A living lab, or living laboratory, is a user-centred, iterative, open-innovation ecosystem concept operating in a territorial context integrating concurrent research and innovation processes within a public-private-people partnership. The concept is based on a systematic user co-creation approach integrating research and innovation processes. These are integrated through the co-creation, exploration, experimentation and evaluation of innovative ideas, scenarios, concepts, and related technological artefacts in real life use cases.

The aim of this action is to initiate the Living Lab Approach as a systematic co-creation approach that brings together business, academia and all relevant stakeholders of the rural Larnaca in an effort to enhance collaboration and engage all stakeholders to assess new ideas and innovative concepts and continue the work that has been initiated with the Be.Cultour workshops.

Sub-action 3.1: Create a Tourism Living Lab for Rural Larnaca

This action is the initiation of a Living Lab Approach as a systematic co-creation approach that brings together business, academia, and all relevant stakeholders for enhancing collaboration. We will create a Tourism Living Lab for Rural Larnaca as well as a learning environment with training, workshops, and seminars in order to upgrade skills and enhance exchange of experiences. With this way we will encourage cooperation, innovation, and development of the circular cultural tourism in the pilot area by involving all the relevant stakeholders.

When: start date and end date:	1/01/2023 – on going
Be.CULTOUR innovation area(s):	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Sensorial Heritage Experience● Nature as heritage● Transformative Travel● Post Cultural Tourism
Identified local challenge(s):	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Overexploitation of High-Demand Areas● High Seasonality

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Lack of a database of cultural monuments and natural heritage sites (hidden mostly). ● Visibility / Accessibility of hidden but also unhidden cultural elements ● Limited Promotion/ Visibility ● Limited level of Collaboration/ Networking/ Synergies ● Low experiential level offer ● Low level of digitalization, innovation, and skills ● Negative impacts on the destination's image ● Low level of sustainability and adaptation to circular economy principles. ● Lack of funds
Cultural heritage asset(s):	All tangible and intangible cultural assets
Target group(s):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Local Communities ● Academia (Universities) ● NGOs ● Local Business ● Policy makers
Responsible stakeholder(s):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Larnaca and Famagusta District Development Agency ● Larnaca Tourism Board
Collaborator(s):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Laona Foundation
Raw budget estimation:	€ 50000
Funding source (European, National, local funds):	Local Funds
Other resources needed:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Human Resources by ANETEL

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of the Environmental Information Centre of ANETEL as a meeting space
Indicator(s) for success (also considering circularity, diversity, and inclusion):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of organisations participating to the Tourism Living Lab • Frequencies of meetings • Number of innovative ideas tested and implemented
Hackathon? Yes or no	No

Sub-action 3.2: Create a Technical and Financial Assistance Office for private and public entities

At the European and National level there is a variety of funds that Rural Larnaca could use in order to fund its projects. For assisting the access to finance and mature projects an office will be created that will assist the local private and public authorities to mature their projects and match their project financing with the appropriate funding scheme either from EU or national funds.

Proving financial and technical support is one of the most powerful tools that can be used to utilise EU and national available funds in order to achieve the vision that we have set up for Rural Larnaca. To help the local private and public entities to navigate the available financing possibilities and to support their assessment of needs and eligibility for assistance within the different EU and National financial instruments is one of the main goals of the office that will be created.

ANETEL, as a Local Action Group and a Fisheries Local Action Group and with a continued participation in different EU projects has gained huge experience in maturing projects and getting access to finance. Based on this, ANETEL will provide its personnel to guide and provide technical and financial assistance to the private and public entities of the Rural Larnaca.

When: start date and end date:	1/01/2023 – on going
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Be.CULTOUR innovation area(s):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sensorial Heritage Experience • Nature as heritage • Transformative Travel • Post Cultural Tourism
Identified local challenge(s):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low level of utilisation of EU and national funds
Cultural heritage asset(s):	All tangible and intangible cultural assets
Target group(s):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Communities • Local Business
Responsible stakeholder(s):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Larnaca and Famagusta District Development Agency
Collaborator(s):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deputy Ministry of Tourism • Ministry of Agriculture, Rural Development and Environment
Raw budget estimation:	€30000
Funding source (European, National, local funds):	Local Funds
Other resources needed:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Human Resources by ANETEL
Indicator(s) for success (also considering circularity, diversity, and inclusion):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of projects funded by EU or National Funds in the new programming period 2021-2027
Hackathon? Yes or no	No

Action 4: Innovative methods for revolutionising interest in archaeological sites

Today, there is an ever-growing interest in the dissemination of knowledge of the material and immaterial values of the historical and archaeological heritage and in the transmission of these values to an extended audience. This occurs through the use of materials and technological solutions, respecting the ruins of our past and protecting their memory.

Rural Larnaca is an area with rich cultural heritage and the condition of fragility of the archaeological and cultural sites has also raised fueling the debate and questions of respect for the place and protection of the ruins and findings. Based on that the action plan includes actions that promote the use of innovative methods for revolutionising the interest of our archeological sites.

Sub-action 4.1: Develop a Web AR application

Web AR application that can recognize monuments and historical sites, fortresses, etc. and offers real-time information about them via mobile camera. The user can see the virtual icons live on the camera while walking, which, with the help of AR technology and GPS, stand exactly where the objects are. He can also see 3D models of mediaeval soldiers, personalities, and objects. The application is a smart guide live on camera, who can explore the monuments of the area or have a tour of the archaeological and cultural sites.

The action can bring a better user experience, ease of use as a web app, promotion of the villages and cultural tourism. In this way, cultural tourism is promoted, through modern augmented reality technology that gives a great user experience.

When: start date and end date:	1/01/2023 – 30/6/2024
Be.CULTOUR innovation area(s):	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Sensorial Heritage Experience● Contemporary Meanings of Heritage● Spiritual Travel experience● Post-cultural tourism

Identified local challenge(s):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Overexploitation of High-Demand Areas ● High Seasonality ● Visibility / Accessibility of hidden but also unhidden cultural elements ● Limited Promotion/ Visibility ● Low level of digitalization, innovation, and skills
Cultural heritage asset(s):	All tangible cultural assets
Target group(s):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Local Communities ● Academia (Universities) ● NGOs ● Policy makers
Responsible stakeholder(s):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Milos Glisovic founder of Monument
Collaborator(s):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Larnaca and Famagusta Districts Development Agency
Raw budget estimation:	€ 20000
Funding source (European, National, local funds):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Leader of Rural Areas of Larnaca and Famagusta Districts – Rural Development Program ● National Funds – Deputy Ministry of Tourism
Other resources needed:	N/A
Indicator(s) for success (also considering circularity, diversity, and inclusion):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Number of people downloading and using the application
Hackathon? Yes or no	YES

Sub-action 4.2: Develop an online experiences booking platform

A web-based application called «Kalosoriset» (means welcome to our area), that people visiting Cyprus can book online experiences, based on what is offered in Rural Larnaca. The

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 Call: H2020-SC6-TRANSFORMATIONS-2020 – Type of action: IA (Innovation action)



system will have a back end and a front-end side. People hosting the experience will be able to manage their bookings and incomes. On the front side visitors will see all the information of the individual experience and book and pay on the spot.

One of the main problems of our rural area is urbanism since many young people choose to move from their villages to the cities, where there are more opportunities for work and leisure. However, if there were more opportunities in the rural areas, they would rather stay in their homelands. This is what «Kalosorisete» wishes to do. Give opportunities and extend the working horizons of people in rural Larnaca. Craftsmen and craftswomen, lovers of customs and traditions of our island will be hosted on this platform. Further, the aim is to give a platform to our long history's gatekeepers to share the wisdom and secrets they hold with the visitors.

The aim is through this web-based application to allow people in the area to expand their workshops, establish new ones and teach the visitors that we are not just a sun and sea destination but an area rich in culture that is available to experience. «Kalosorisete» wishes to be the connecting link between the gatekeepers of our heritage and the people that wish to explore it and learn it.

When: start date and end date:	1/11/2022 – 30/06/2023
Be.CULTOUR innovation area(s):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Sensorial Heritage Experience ● Nature as heritage ● Transformative Travel ● Post Cultural Tourism
Identified local challenge(s):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Overexploitation of High-Demand Areas ● High Seasonality ● Visibility / Accessibility of hidden but also unhidden cultural elements ● Limited Promotion/ Visibility ● Low level of digitalization, innovation, and skills
Cultural heritage asset(s):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Hidden and unhidden cultural heritage sites of the area ● Intangible cultural heritage

Target group(s):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Communities • Local Business • NGOs • Local Associations
Responsible stakeholder(s):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maria Kapari – founder of «Kalosorisete»
Collaborator(s):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Larnaca and Famagusta Districts Development Agency
Raw budget estimation:	€15000
Funding source (European, National, local funds):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leader of Rural Areas of Larnaca and Famagusta Districts – Rural Development Program • National Funds – Deputy Ministry of Tourism
Other resources needed:	N/A
Indicator(s) for success (also considering circularity, diversity, and inclusion):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of offered experiences • Number of visitors to the platform
Hackathon? Yes or no	No

Sub-action 4.3: Develop an Interactive Map for Larnaca

The electronic interactive map of the Rural Larnaca will promote the most important points of interest of the area such as villages, monuments, museums, hotels/ accommodations, churches/ chapels, beaches, local shops, restaurants and cafes, nature, walking and bike trails, and etc.

Combined with the road network, the visitor will be able to choose the best route he wants to take to his destination via his mobile phone. The information of the geographical points of interest will be presented to the visitor using ARCGIS technology.

Indicatively, the Interactive Map will present in detail for the Rural Larnaca the following:

- ✓ History of the villages of Larnaca
- ✓ One photo for each point of interest

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Call: H2020-SC6-TRANSFORMATIONS-2020 – Type of action: IA (Innovation action)



- ✓ Presentation of geographical information
- ✓ Sights (Sites & Monuments)
- ✓ A presentation will be made for each of the attractions and a relevant link will be given.
- ✓ Points of interest
- ✓ Discover
- ✓ Tours

The Interactive Map will be designed in such a way that it is also friendly for mobile devices as well having a search field for each village, attractions, museum, etc. Also, a QR code will be created so it can be placed in all the points of interest. With this way the visitors can more easily open the Interactive Map from every point of interest. The Interactive Map will also be able to read the location of the mobile of the user.

When: start date and end date:	1/06/2022 – 30/12/2022
Be.CULTOUR innovation area(s):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Sensorial Heritage Experience ● Nature as heritage ● Transformative Travel ● Post Cultural Tourism
Identified local challenge(s):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Overexploitation of High-Demand Areas ● High Seasonality ● Visibility / Accessibility of hidden but also unhidden cultural elements ● Limited Promotion/ Visibility ● Low level of digitalization, innovation, and skills
Cultural heritage asset(s):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Hidden and unhidden cultural heritage sites of the area ● Intangible cultural heritage
Target group(s):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Local Communities ● Local Business ● NGOs ● Local Associations

Responsible stakeholder(s):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Larnaca and Famagusta Districts Development Agency
Collaborator(s):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Larnaca Tourism Board
Raw budget estimation:	€17100
Funding source (European, National, local funds):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leader of Rural Areas of Larnaca and Famagusta Districts – Rural Development Program
Other resources needed:	N/A
Indicator(s) for success (also considering circularity, diversity, and inclusion):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of visitors to the platform
Hackathon? Yes or no	No

Action 5: Design of touristic packages to promote Rural Larnaca

The lack of promotion and visibility of the Rural Larnaca comes to intercept the design of touristic packages to promote Rural Larnaca, especially the villages, based on specific areas of interest which can be promoted by tour operators such as thematic parks, gastronomy, wine routes, traditional products, natural treasures in order to attract tourism, foreigners, and locals, to the area.

Sub-action 5.1: Create a multidisciplinary museum.

The 'Rural Larnaca Honey Villages' is a cluster of nine quaint villages in the Rural Larnaca that practice beekeeping and honey production and have their own unique, collective identity. Sadly, some of the villages were affected by summer fires that destroyed land and the ecosystem of the bees, but hope can grow out of the ashes of tragedy, as the creation of three beekeeping and honey themed nature trails will see the area regenerated once more.

This idea originated from the Melini village area, which is among the well-known honey producing villages of the area, so such a museum would be the ideal vehicle to showcase local honey. Special focus will be given to the organoleptic characteristics of the product and also to

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the plants related to it, so that the visitor as well as the artist can be introduced and delve into the product and its origin, and by extension to connect with the space. Invitations to poets, artists, musicians, and others to spend time as guests of the museum. Schoolchildren organised visits will be part of the vision as well as University sponsored research, centred around the Rural Larnaca

When: start date and end date:	1/01/2023 – 30/6/2024
Be.CULTOUR innovation area(s):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sensorial Heritage Experience
Identified local challenge(s):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low level of sustainability and adaptation to circular economy principles. • Overexploitation of High-Demand Areas • Limited level of Collaboration/ Networking/ Synergies • High Seasonality • Experiential level offer is currently very low • Limited Promotion/ Visibility
Cultural heritage asset(s):	Honey: a product of long history for the area. It has been known since antiquity since the 6 th century. Its importance to the island can be proven through archaeological findings.
Target group(s):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Honey Villages (Kato Drys, Kato Lefkara, Layia, Melino, Odou, Ora, Vavla, Vavatsinia and Agioi Vavatsinias)
Responsible stakeholder(s):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Larnaca Tourism Board
Collaborator(s):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Larnaca and Famagusta Districts Development Agency
Raw budget estimation:	€ 25000

Funding source (European, National, local funds):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Recover and Resilience Plan
Other resources needed:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● N/A
Indicator(s) for success (also considering circularity, diversity, and inclusion):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Number of people visiting the museum ● Visitors' satisfaction survey level ● Event and education attendance ● Media appearance
Hackathon? Yes or no	No

Sub-action 5.2: Design of touristic thematic packages and promotional campaign for Rural Larnaca

This activity consists of three parts. The first part is the creation of a database of cultural and natural heritage sites. Rural Larnaca is an area with rich hidden and unhidden cultural and natural heritage sites that are only known to the locals. Unfortunately, this is not documented anywhere, especially the unhidden ones. The idea is the creation of a database of cultural monuments and natural heritage sites with all their historic information that will be listed in order to see which could be connected to create authentic routes that will take you through the history of the Rural Larnaca. The material will be also used for educational purposes as well so that the young people of the area will learn more about their rich history.

The second part of the activity is the design of touristic packages and the promotion of Rural Larnaca as a cultural and natural heritage destination. The aim is to create one-to-four-day visits for tourists visiting the Rural Larnaca and a campaign that will target foreigners and locals as well as tourists from long-distance countries, whose vacations range between ten days and two weeks.

When: start date and end date:	1/10/2022 – 30/03/2024
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Be.CULTOUR innovation area(s):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Rural Co-Living ● Sensorial Heritage Experience ● Contemporary Meanings of Heritage ● Spiritual Travel experience ● Post-cultural tourism
Identified local challenge(s):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Low level of sustainability and adaptation to circular economy principles. ● Overexploitation of High-Demand Areas ● Limited level of Collaboration/ Networking/ Synergies ● High Seasonality ● Experiential level offer is currently very low ● Limited Promotion/ Visibility
Cultural heritage asset(s):	Hidden and unhidden cultural and natural sites
Target group(s):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Local authorities of the area ● Local Business ● Deputy Ministry of Tourism ● Larnaca Tourism Board
Responsible stakeholder(s):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Laona Foundation (for the documentation of the hidden and unhidden sites) ● Larnaca Tourism Board (designing tour packages and promotion) ● Larnaca and Famagusta District Development Agency (designing tour packages and promotion)
Collaborator(s):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Local authorities and business
Raw budget estimation:	€50000
Funding source (European, National, local funds):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Leader of Rural Areas of Larnaca and Famagusta Districts – Rural Development Program ● National Funds – Deputy Ministry of Tourism

Other resources needed:	N/A
Indicator(s) for success (also considering circularity, diversity, and inclusion):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of authentic routes created • Number of tourists visiting the area • Average length of stay
Hackathon? Yes or no	No

