

# TRANSFER OF KNOWLEDGE TO IMPROVE CULTURAL HERITAGE REVITALIZATION

Assistant Professor PhD **Aniko Noemi TURI**

Catholic Institute, Faculty of Business Studies, Ljubljana, Slovenia

[anikonoemi.turi@gmail.com](mailto:anikonoemi.turi@gmail.com)

## **Abstract:**

*Damaged and neglected historical buildings, not renovated for years are a common feature of the Central-European region. Because of the lack of public funding, and the interest of private investors knowledge about alternative ways of financing renovation of historical buildings, the efforts should be made in a direction to the interdisciplinary search of the improvements in skills and capacities of the public partners. According to the Restaura CE 339, Interreg project, the main objective is to raise professional competences and managerial capacities in revitalisation and public private partnership (PPP) schemes. That is why the purpose of this paper is to show how to achieve this goal by knowledge transfer, so public authorities become initiators of future PPP projects.*

**Key words:** public private partnership, cultural heritage, revitalisation, knowledge transfer

**JEL classification:** K300, H790.

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

Many times, local, national authorities, who accept important political decisions, are not aware of the development potentials of cultural heritage to alleviate social and economic issues. Usually they understand culture and its heritage as an issue of art, local identity, or source to enrich tourist offer, but not as an element which can ensure stable and decent jobs or many know-how ideas for creative industry, marketing and other products based on tradition and innovation. Because of the lack of public funding, and the interest of private investors knowledge about alternative ways of financing renovation of historical buildings, the efforts should be made in a direction to the interdisciplinary search of the improvements in skills and capacities of the public partners. Public Private Partnership (PPP) has been a subject of extensive research since decades when private partners started to invest in public sector projects. Financing revitalisation and management of cultural heritage buildings are of crucial importance. The lack of business approach in culture often leads to a misunderstanding of culture as an art and not as a generator to produce new creative products (Jelinčič et al, 2017).

The main purpose of this paper is to show how to raise professional competences and managerial capacities in revitalisation and PPP schemes by knowledge transfer, so public authorities become initiators of future PPP projects. Knowledge transfer and best practices may be considered an adequate tool in such attempts. Furthermore, the paper aims to evaluate the effectiveness one of the alternatives of the knowledge transfer in the revitalization projects of buildings under cultural heritage by PPP in Slovenia. The research is based on the widely expressed need of knowledge transfer to improve the public authorities' motivation for PPP projects in heritage revitalisation plans may be considered also as the source of the new values.

In accordance with the previously mentioned objective of the research, the main goal of the research is to present of the existing transnational documents in the field of knowledge transfer for the heritage revitalisation plan and PPPs, which are one of the outputs of the RESTAURA project financed by the Interreg CE program of the European Union. According to these documents, it is provided how is the knowledge transfer delivered any analysed its effectiveness in Slovenia, Croatia, Slovakia and Poland in order to improve the awareness and skills of public authorities about potentials of abandoned cultural heritage and the use of the PPP for their revitalisation.

## 2. THEORETIC BACKGROUND

According to the European Commission's (2009) definition "PPPs are forms of cooperation between public authorities and the private sector that aim to modernise the delivery of infrastructure and strategic public services. In some cases, PPPs involve the financing, design, construction, renovation, management or maintenance of an infrastructure asset; in others, they incorporate the provision of a service traditionally delivered by public institutions." Furthermore, it stresses the risk sharing between the parties, efficiency of the public sectors. Many times, PPP is misunderstood as concession or public procurement. Therefore, the main characteristics of PPP are as, the risk sharing, contribution of both public and private parties and the maintenance and management of the asset which is the subject of the enterprise (Jelinčić et al., 2016). According to the Directive 2004/18/EC, 2004/17/ES, of the European Parliament and of the Council, in Slovenia the Public-Private Partnership Act was adopted in 2006 (JZJP) in favour to create and strengthen the relation between the public and the private sector. Based on the Slovenian PPP Act, in 2013 at the municipality of Tišina successfully completed a PPP project regarding to the revitalisation of Batthyany court as one of the cultural heritage buildings in the region (Bahor et al. 2013).

The cultural heritage takes on a variety of meanings and forms around the world. The contemporary understanding of cultural heritage emphasizes that tangible and intangible elements are indispensable symbols for creation and strengthening of personal or social (local/regional/national/transnational) identity (Lenzerini, 2011). The revitalisation of cultural heritage buildings or their surroundings can foster new social innovation, which can contribute to cohesiveness, and consequently a healthier population able to accept new innovative ideas for economic development (Makuc 2018). This leads to many possibilities for the introduction of networking among different sectors and residents, especially if the preparation of events includes local authorities, cultural institutions, development agencies, small and medium entrepreneurs, youth and other volunteers from local associations (Fakin Bajec, 2016).

Financing revitalisation and management of cultural heritage buildings are of crucial importance. The lack of business approach in culture often leads to misunderstanding of culture as an art and not as a generator to produce new creative products. Consequently, the cultural heritage buildings lack financing from the private sector.

Important challenge is also promotion of cultural heritage and its product which can be achieved in different ways: through active presence in festivals which are organized in heritage places and where business people meet, sell or promote their products, or collaborate in promotion activities. Entrepreneurs that are more adaptable and regionally/locally sensitive can expect to achieve better economic performance in revitalisation projects by the PPP.

Therefore, planning to invest in the meaningful use of the cultural heritage by the PPP necessarily requires not only the knowledge of the social and historical reality, which is reflected in, among other things, heritage elements and practices for revitalising and managing heritage assets for different purposes, but also the legal and financial framework of the existing PPP policy.

Knowledge transfer either in the PPP or in other specific cases is a process within an organisation or outside of the organisation. This knowledge sharing process also can be delivered on different levels, among different organizations, person. Also it has different types and approaches such as explicit, tacit or embedded knowledge (Smith, 2001, Cheng et al, 2011, Guzman and Trivelato, 2007). The approaches of knowledge transfer are replication approach, lecturing approach, coaching and exploring approach (Török, 2017, Van Doorn and Van Doorn, 2014, Guzman and Trivelato, 2007). Transfer process is to find out who are the knowledge holders, and then the knowledge holder should be encouraged to share the knowledge. Furthermore, it is significant to design the system of the knowledge transfer and the way how to carry out. It follows the measure of the transfer guarantee and the application of the knowledge transferred.

### 3. EFFECTIVELY COMPLETE KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER ACCORDING TO THE LECTURING APPROACH

The preparation and implementation of knowledge transfer for public authorities aimed at improved skills and competences of the public stakeholders to procure PPP projects for heritage revitalisation purposes. In Slovenia, Croatia, Slovakia and Poland workshops were implemented according to workshop material as the main project outputs such as Handbook on PPP in Build Heritage and Revitalisation Projects (Restaura, 2016) has been developed within the RESTAURA project. It represents a starting point in a discussion about assessment, content development and evaluation of the PPP in the revitalisation of cultural heritage. The Guidebook for Local Authorities (Jelinčić et al, 2017), is the main methodological document of the Restaura project. It gives a framework needed to develop Integrated Built Heritage Revitalisation Plans and to understand the required steps in contracting a private partner. The Helpdesk (Restaura 2016) is the transnational help facility of the Restaura project partners through which PPP stakeholders in the PPP from cultural heritage have been given a basic information about PPP from the cultural heritage. Nevertheless, the web-based tool is a platform that will consolidate main characteristics of the PPP for the cultural heritage and offer them to potential stakeholders in an interactive and practical way.

The structure of the workshops was based on the needs, assessment, design, content development, methods, and evaluation. Therefore, the remaining of the workshop material documents were focused on highlighting only these basic features.

**Table 1. Features of the workshop structure**

Needs	Present a concrete example of revitalisation. Invite: - legal and/or financial expert from the PPP to explain legal and/or financial needs of such project (process); - potential investor to explain the needs on behalf of the private partner in PPP project; - expert with historian and/or cultural background, who can explain significance of cultural heritage in a broader context.
Assessment	Aim to bring Integrated Built Heritage Revitalisation Plan (IBHRP) closer to the participants particularly the principles and procedures to accelerate revitalisation with the use of public-private partnerships within the three main topics: - Status and legal framework (national and EU), - Economic and financial aspects of PPP, and - Public aspects of protecting cultural heritage.
Design	Ensure to organize a sufficient number of sessions. Ensure to invite a sufficient number of municipalities to take part at workshops and invite relevant speakers.
Content development	Special focus needs to be on the presentation of the PPP policy on the basic level from the legal, economic and procedural point of view with many national cases, pictures, explanations. Lecturers/speakers should show them a legal, economic guidelines and other national documents referring to the IBHRP
Methods	Activities were implemented within a reasonable time frame, i.e. within min 4 and max 7 hours of activities. A single workshop was implemented within a single working day.
Evaluation	Methods for the evaluation that are suggested to be used were desk research, participant/stakeholder questionnaires and targeted interviews on spot with some of the participants.

Source: Author/Restaura

The goal of the workshops in were to give participants the skills they might need to undertake revitalization projects of buildings under cultural heritage, from inception to termination. It consisted four sessions: legal, financial, technical and revitalization and empowered the participants with the knowledge to develop and implement policies that strengthen the environment for infrastructure IBHRP and PPPs in their countries.

#### 4. METHODOLOGY

Regarding the evaluation of the workshops in the partner countries by the participants, a simple-to-fill and easy-to-read evaluation document was prepared and all partners were asked to disseminate it among the participants. Questionnaires were filled-in after the workshop. The organisers were responsible to collect and analyse them. The aim of the questionnaire was to examine the satisfaction of the participants at the workshops.

After the event, participants were asked to answer 8 brief questions, 6 of which were provided on a 5-level ordinal scale (1 – disappointed/not important, 2 – not satisfied/less important, 3 – neutral, 4 –satisfied/important, 5 –very satisfied/ very important), 2 were identification question (name and type of organisation), and 1 question was descriptive. Ordinal scale provides information about the order of choices while descriptive questions let the participants describe their opinion. Questionnaires were disseminated at the end of the workshops for the participants.

**Table 2. External Workshops Evaluation**

	<b>Croatia</b>	<b>Slovakia</b>	<b>Poland</b>	<b>Slovenia</b>
# of respondents	34	164	68	33
Average grade (overall)	4,6	4,1	4,6	4,3
Workshops organised	4	8	4	4

Source: Restaura, External Evaluation, 2019

It was already mentioned before, that the workshops consisted four sessions: legal, economic, technical and revitalisation. Each session received an average grade between 4.2 and 4.4, giving high credits to organizers. The highest score 5 was given 778 times out 1778 grades given altogether (44%), while the lowest grade 1 was given 6 times. The highest average score of 4.44 was given to question “Please assess the quality of technical aspects at the workshop” that is indirectly related to value added, quality and efficiency of the implementation of workshops.

The lowest average grade of 4.17 was given to question “How do you see the need of revitalize cultural heritage by public-private partnership?”. As the participants were mostly for public authorities, this is not surprising, but nevertheless is promising as it speaks about relatively high awareness at the level of local authorities about the need to revitalize cultural heritage.

#### 5. CONCLUSION

The overall assessment of the research is that the recognition of the importance of the adoption of the knowledge about alternative ways of financing renovation of historical buildings, which has been increasingly acknowledged. Also workshops were well received by the local authorities. In particular, high awareness of public authorities and explicit need to have quality information about revitalization projects regarding legal and financial aspects confirms the need for further activities in this area also in the future.

Consequently, the main result of the research supports the thesis that knowledge transport gives public authorities the skills they need to undertake revitalization projects of buildings under cultural heritage, from inception to termination. It will empower them with the knowledge to develop and implement policies that strengthen the environment for infrastructure integrated built heritage revitalisation plan and PPPs in their countries.

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