

URBAN HERITAGE AND MEGA-EVENTS: THE CASE OF MATERA-BASILICATA 2019 EUROPEAN CAPITAL OF CULTURE



JPICH
Heritage
in
Changing
Environments

Project Partners:
Politecnico di Milano
University of Hull
Neapolis University Pafos
International Cultural Centre

December 2020

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This document derives from the joint research and intellectual effort of all contributors. However the first general draft of sections 1.1, part of 1.5, 2.1, 2.3, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 4.2 can be attributed to Zachary M. Jones; sections 1.2, 4.1, 4.3 to Davide Ponzini; sections 1.3, 2.3, 3.2, 3.4, 4.4, 4.5 can be attributed to Enrico Tommarchi; sections 1.4, part of 1.5, 2.2 to Stefano D'Armento.

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FRONT COVER

Band playing at the belvedere Piazzetta Pascoli in Matera for the inauguration of the 2019 European Capital of Culture
(Zachary M. Jones, 2019).

BACK COVER

The “Who cares? Ecologia del dialogo” performance at the Castello Tramontano in Matera
(Zachary M. Jones, 2019).

LAYOUT DESIGN

Evanthia Dova

HOMEETM

Heritage Opportunities/threats within Mega-Events in Europe:

Changing environments, new challenges and possible solutions for preservation in mega-events embedded in heritage-rich European cities



Urban heritage and mega- events: The case of Matera- Basilicata 2019 European Capital of Culture

This document corresponds to one key output of the WP2 (A2.5 Matera Report of Findings) in the JPICH-financed project “HOMEETM – Heritage Opportunities/threats within Mega-Events in Europe”. It investigates the nexus between mega-events and heritage by observing the case of the Matera-Basilicata 2019 European Capital of Culture before and during the celebration. For this purpose, a number of considerations and background explorations were necessary and in part are included in this report for the readers to understand the complexity of the context of Matera. The particular perspective of the research work prevented us from working on more general assessments that, to our knowledge, were carried out by other research institutions and local organizations. The research team comprises three institutions (Politecnico di Milano, University of Hull, Neapolis University Pafos). The points of view and perspectives presented in this document are part of the HOMEETM research project and are not affiliated or directly connected with any local, national or international organization or institution.

Please cite as:
Ponzini D., Jones Z. M.,
D'Armento S., Scandiffo A.,
Bianchini F., Tommarchi
E. (2020). *Urban Heritage
and Mega-events: The Case
of Matera-Basilicata 2019
European Capital of
Culture*. Weblink: <http://www.tau-lab.polimi.it/matera-report-file.pdf>

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December 2020



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The Matera-Basilicata 2019 ECoC case at a glance



The Sasso Barisano during the opening ceremony on Jan. 19, 2019 during the Matera Cielo Stellato event (source: Zachary M. Jones, 2019).

The case of the Matera-Basilicata 2019 ECoC clearly demonstrates the significant impact that events like the ECoC can have on cities, even before carrying out the year-long program – as occurred in Matera after it won the bid in 2014. As the oldest continuously inhabited city in Europe, Matera represents in many ways a heritage-rich city and shows the complexity of the heritage/event relationship. While the mega-event planning and celebration undeniably contributed to improvements (in terms of accessibility, public spaces, etc.), the impressive heritage of the city was not widely integrated with the ECoC interventions and nonetheless absorbed most of the visitors' attention.

Key heritage issues and takeaways:

- Reimagining Southern European cities through heritage and mega-events
- Fragile heritage contexts determine the level of mega-event interventions
- Political disconnects separate the mega-event from long-term strategies
- Public participation should be integrated throughout the organization of the event
- Mega-events can contribute to heritage-based mass tourism



MATERA 2019
OPEN FUTURE

Facts and figures

City population
60,403 (2017)

GDP per capita
City
€ 19,778.625 (2015)
Region of Basilicata
€ 15,965.715 (2015)

Tourists
730,434 overnight (2019)
447,721 overnight (2017)
244,847 overnight (2014)

Event attendance
328,000

Total no. of events
1,228

Total event cost
€ 49,000,000

Heritage Project budget
N/A

Page II: Matera, Sasso Barisano (source: Zachary M. Jones, 2019).

Opposite page: Light display on Via del Corso (source: Zachary M. Jones, 2019).

1.0 Using the ECoC to overcome a heritage of shame and missing infrastructural links

1.1 Matera, the oldest continuously inhabited city in Europe

Matera is a medium-small sized city of 60,000 inhabitants located on the sole of the boot that is the Italian peninsula in the region of Basilicata. Matera is the third oldest continuously inhabited settlement in the entire world, founded during the Palaeolithic era. It is renowned as the City of the Sassi, or stones, which are the oldest neighbourhoods comprised of caves excavated from the rock face of the ravine that the city is built upon. These rock settlements are noted for being perfectly adapted to their geomorphological setting which promoted a sustainable relationship with their natural environment, particularly due to the water collection and distribution system embedded within the Sassi (Damiano et al., 1998; ICOMOS, 1992). Despite its long and storied history, within Italy the city is most remembered as the "shame of Italy" as declared by Palmiro Togliatti, the leader

Fig. 2 A panorama of the city of Matera as seen from the Park of the Rupestrian Churches (source: Zachary M. Jones, 2019).



of the Italian Communist Party in 1948 due to the extreme poverty and poor living conditions of the inhabitants in the Sassi after WWII. The national government then set up a vast new housing plan that turned the city into an international urban planning laboratory during the 1950s and 1960s aimed at creating modern neighbourhoods with better living conditions in which to relocate the residents that lived in the Sassi (Pontrandolfi, 2002). This forced relocation created a blight in the historic city that left the Sassi largely abandoned for the next forty years (Mininni & Dicillo, 2012). Despite the importance and historic value of the city's heritage, it retains this difficult meaning for many local residents.

However, the idea of Matera as the shame of Italy came to be challenged in 1993 when the Sassi and Park of Rupestrian Churches were listed as World Heritage Site by UNESCO and subsequently in 2014 the city was awarded the title of European Capital of Culture for the year 2019. These two moments have been framed as an important turning point in overcoming negative stereotypes of the city as well as working towards the revitalization of the Sassi area in the historic centre. This first began in the late 1980s and 1990s through a resettlement program that sought to encourage people to return to live in the centre and restore homes. However, in recent years Matera has had to cope with the 'airbnbification' of the Sassi and the historical centre, with many dwellings rented on the Airbnb platform and turned

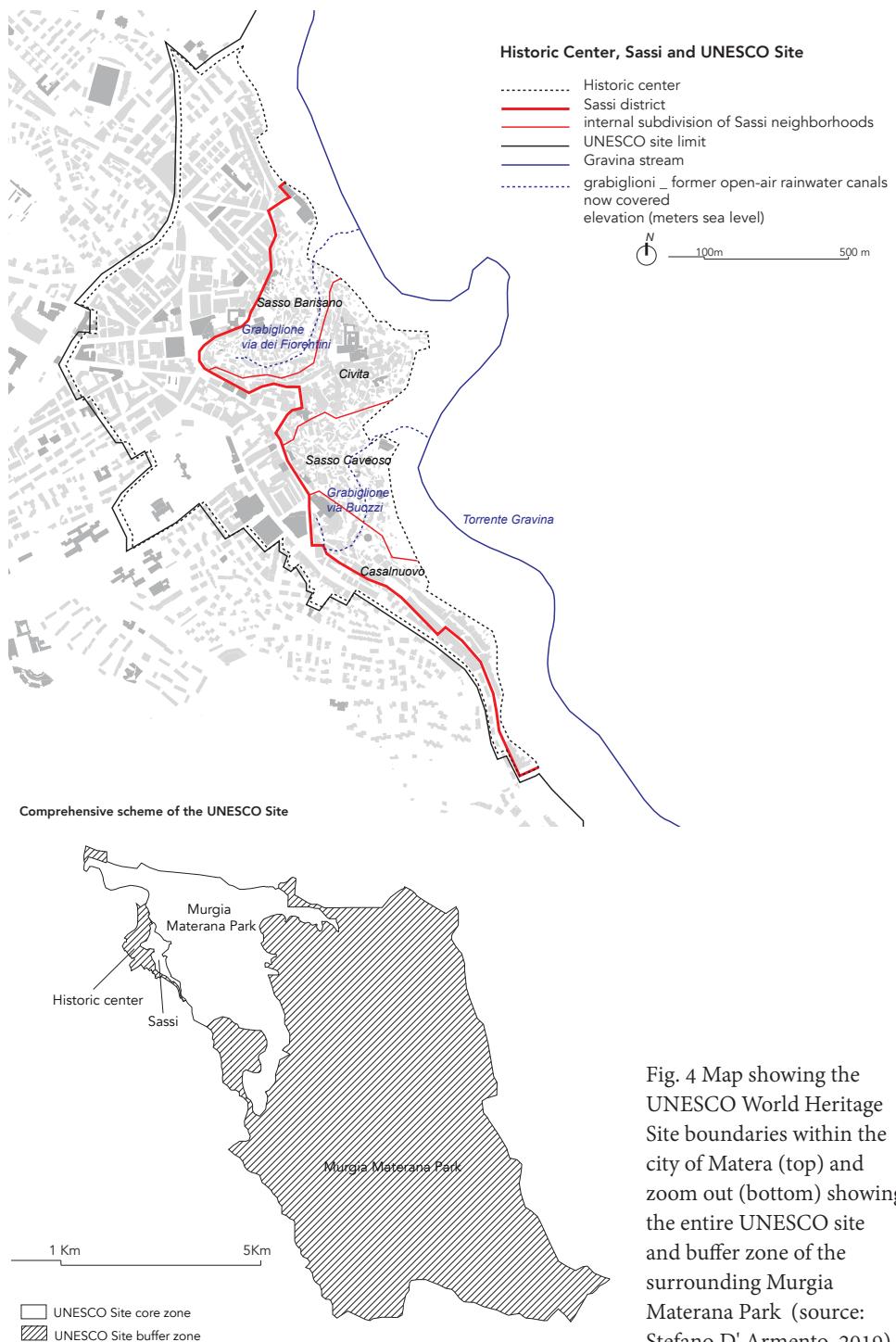


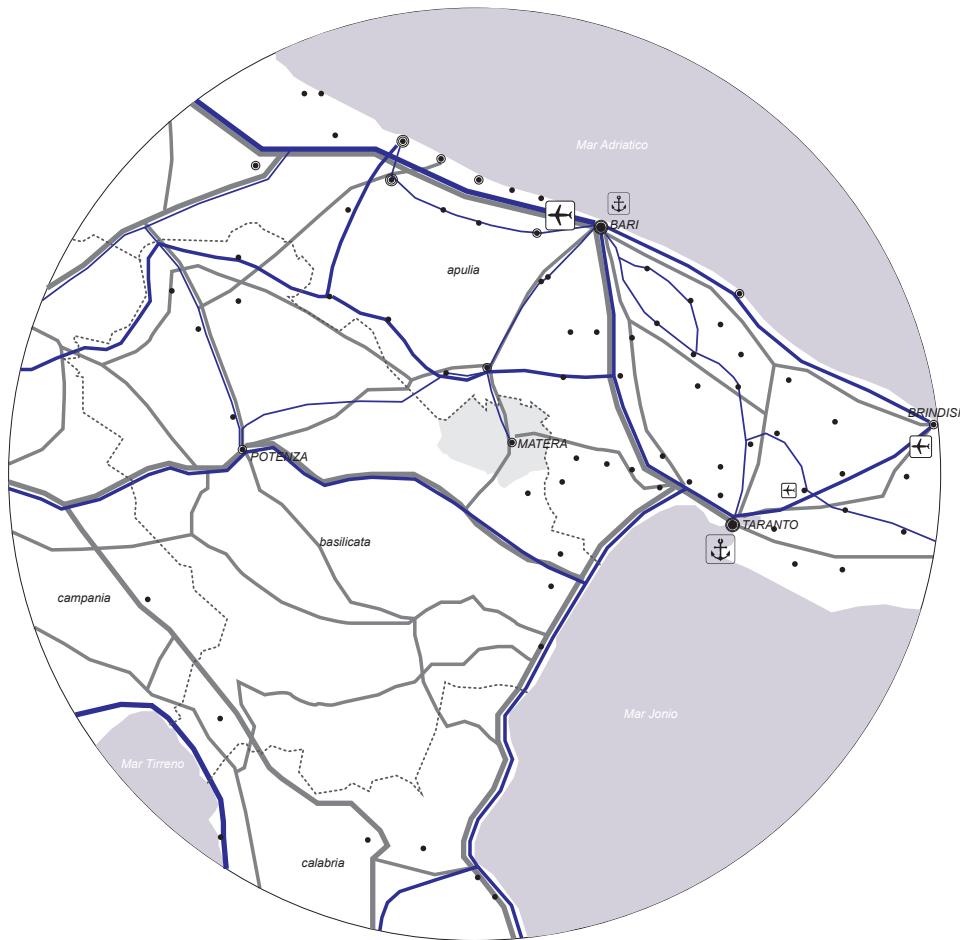
Fig. 3 The 11th century Rupestrian Church of St. Agnes located in the Park of Rupestrian Churches (source: Zachary M. Jones, 2019).

into Bed&Breakfasts more generally (Picsacia et al., 2017). The increase in the number of properties for rent has grown steadily since 2016 when there were 446 rentals listed to more than doubling to over a 1000 by 2019; almost half of these are clustered in the Sassi. While such developments have greatly improved the city in terms of reducing the levels of abandonment, it has also created a tourist bubble in the Sassi that has introduced new socio-economic issues for local residents.

One of the particular aspects that has greatly informed the city's development historically is its location near the border with the Apulia Region. Due to their positioning and to the specific topography, the city and province have always maintained stronger relations with Apulia, the region which historically they were connected to, despite the fact that Matera is currently part of the Basilicata Region territory. Matera is located 70 Km from Bari, the capital of the Apulia Region which serves as the main gateway to Matera through its airport, port and main train station. This linking is clear also in terms of infrastructure. The main road and only railway, a local service on a narrow gauge, arrives from Bari through Altamura, while the connection with the rest of the province is provided by the road to Ferrandina, which links the city with the Basento valley, the main infrastructural corridor of the entire region. The national railway line planned to place a station in La Martella district to serve the industrial area and was started in 1987. However, works were interrupted in 1998 until restarting in 2003 for the completion of basic works and then in 2016, in part due to the upcoming 2019 ECoC, without reaching completion. In general, Matera's limited accessibility has been one of the main challenges facing the city, both in terms of growth and development as well as becoming a growing tourist destination (Baldassarre et al., 2017).

Considering these various challenges facing the city, as well as recognizing the broader issues facing Southern Italy as a whole, from decreasing population to reduced economic activity compared to the north of the country, the 2019 European Capital of Culture came to be framed





territorial scale infrastructure

| | | |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------|---|
| regional borders | name of region | NAME OF CAPITAL OF PROVINCE |
| ██████████ municipality of Matera | | |
| Cities | | |
| ● 200.000 < 350.000 | ██████████ ports | ██████████ E-roads |
| ◎ 100.000 < 200.000 | ██████████ airports | ██████████ other main motorways |
| ● 50.000 < 100.000 | | ██████████ main national railway network |
| • 10.000 < 50.000 | | ██████████ secondary national railway network |
| | | ██████████ local railway networks |

Fig. 5 Matera in relation to its territorial infrastructure
(source: Stefano D'Armento, 2019).

as a key moment of investment and development, not only for Matera but the wider territory as well. This intention of spreading the effects of the event were made clear in the bid as the event was officially entitled the Matera-Basilicata 2019 ECoC with 130 other municipalities eventually participating in the 2019 celebrations. With the city's heritage such a

clearly embedded aspect in its identity and physical form, it would be impossible for the event to avoid addressing the city's heritage in some way. The relationship between the 2019 ECoC and heritage is complex as the Sassi would come to host a number of events and organisers also intended to promote other heritage narratives beyond the historic centre. Yet the event also introduced many challenges, from a drastic increase in tourism resulting from the international promotion along with political changes that would affect the implementation of the event.

1.1.1 City and event facts and figures

Tab. 1 City and event facts and figures (source: elaboration by the authors).

1 demo.istat.it (31/12/2017).

2 Valore calcolato utilizzando reddito IRPEF (2015) from: <http://rsdi.regione.basilicata.it/BasilicataStatistica/BasilicataStatistica.html> e popolazione (2015) from: demo.istat.it.

3 ibid.

4 ibid.

5 https://www.aptbasilicata.it/fileadmin/uploads/Statistiche/Archivio_1999-2019/Archivio_CMt_riep.pdf.

6 <http://www.aptbasilicata.it/Statistiche-sul-Turismo.1126.0.html>.

7 A Matera si produce cultura. Report di monitoraggio di Matera Capitale Europea della Cultura 2019 (<https://www.matera-basilicata2019.it/it/report-2019/a-matera-si-produce-cultura.html>).

8 <https://www.matera-basilicata2019.it/it/report-2019/indirizzi-di-legacy.html>.

9 Matera città candidata capitale europea della cultura 2019, Dossier di candidatura, 2014.

10 ibid.

| City/Event | Matera-Basilicata 2019 European Capital of Culture | |
|--|--|--|
| Year | 2019 | |
| City population | 60,403 (2017) ¹ | |
| GDP (city) | € 1,195,340,678.32 (2015) ² | |
| GDP per capita (local/regional) | € 19,778.625 Matera (2015) ³ € 15,965.715 Basilicata (2015) ⁴ | |
| Number of annual visitors before/during/after event | 2019 arrivals 388,158; overnight stays 730,434 ⁵ 2017 arrivals 281,514; overnight stays 447,721 2014 arrivals 153,005; overnight stays 244,847 1999 arrivals 34,696; overnight stays 88,700 ⁶ | |
| Event attendance | 497,721 ⁷ | |
| Total no. of events | 1,228 ⁸ | |
| Heritage % of events | N/A | |
| Audience demographics (age, gender, etc.) | N/A | |
| Total event operation budget (bid) | € 51,980,000 ⁹ | |
| Infrastructure cost (bid) | € 650,000,000 ¹⁰ | |

| | |
|---|---|
| Infrastructure cost (other budget) | € 261,000,000 (SS 96 Bari – Altamura road) ¹¹ € 210,000,000 (Ferrandina – Matera railway) ¹² |
| Cultural/ Entertainment Program cost | N/A |
| Heritage project budget | N/A |
| Public funding (bid) | € 44,700,000 ¹³ |
| Private funding (bid) | € 7,280,000 ¹⁴ |
| Legacy funding programme (bid) | € 5,655,424 (program) € 977,224 (for advertisement) € 753,960 (overhead/wages) |

11 Grandi Progetti, Domanda di conferma del sostegno a norma degli articoli 39-41 del regolamento (ce) n. 1083/2006 e allegato xxi del regolamento (ce) n. 1828/2006. FESR - Fondo Europeo di Sviluppo Regionale Investimenti in Infrastrutture. 2012, p.60.

12 Legge 11 Dicembre 2016, n.232 art. 1 c. 591.

13 Matera città candidata capitale europea della cultura 2019, Dossier di candidatura, 2014.

14 ibid.

1.1.2 Matera-Basilicata 2019 timeline

Tab. 2 Timeline of the event's planning and management process. Basic list of actors and institutional levels in the 2019 ECoC process (source: elaboration by the authors).

Bidding

2012-2014

**Public administration
(state, local,
etc.)**

Matera Municipality, Basilicata Region,
Province of Matera

**Event
organisers**

Matera 2019 Committee

**Other actors
(Heritage,
private, etc.)**

| Planning | Implementation |
|--|--|
| 2014-2018 | 2019 |
| MiBACT, MiSE, Matera Municipality, Basilicata Region, Province of Matera | MiBACT, MiSE, Matera Municipality, Basilicata Region, Province of Matera |
| Matera Basilicata 2019 Foundation | Matera Basilicata 2019 Foundation |
| Apulia Region, FAL, Chamber of Commerce, Basilicata University | Apulia Region, FAL, Chamber of Commerce, Basilicata University, Circolo La Scaletta, Fondazione SoutHeritage |

1.2 Methodology and overview of the sources

As part of a broader research project, this case study aimed at observing the relationship between a heritage-rich environment with one mega-event before and during the celebration. As with the other past case studies part of the HOMEE Research Project, the study of Matera-Basilicata 2019 utilised a number of primary and secondary sources. In this case study, the researchers had the opportunity to study the event in real time as it was unfolding. The earliest visits took place at the end of 2018 and continued throughout 2019. Extensive fieldwork proved to be indispensable for approaching such a complex environment and avoiding typical simplification. A set of visits were planned and performed before and during the event, consisting of participant observations to events and more generally the uses of relevant heritage places and neighbourhoods involved in the mega-event, 20 semi-structured Interviews to core actors and stakeholders in Matera and the region (The full list of interviewees can be found in section 5.0 References). Additionally, a number of meetings and interactions with the local population, cultural policy actors and activists also informed the development of the research.

The interviews were conducted with both local and regional decision-makers and selected informants and focused on the heritage issues and opportunities related to the mega-event. These allowed us to deepen our observation of given sites inside the heritage area of the Sassi as well as in other areas of the city. In particular, the interaction with locals and experts contributed to specific focuses through inhabitant-led tours and less formalised meetings with local opinion-makers. These activities paved the way for organizing and carrying out the Living Lab involving interviewees and other local actors and decision makers to discuss and address together the key issues facing heritage in Matera, from multiple local perspectives. The partnership with local stakeholders secured the continuity and feasibility of this package of work. These on-site visits also allowed the researchers to observe and

attend events as well as follow the advancement of various restoration and development projects throughout the year. In addition, one research team member, Dr. Franco Bianchini, cooperated with the local promoters and organisers of the event from 2010-2014, in his capacity as scientific advisor for the first bid book and later as a member of the Scientific Committee of the Matera-Basilicata 2019 Foundation. This document was enriched by these long-term experiences and insights; however, it does not reflect any position of these or other organizations specifically.

The Living Lab enabled the team to explore the relations between local stakeholders while the European Capital of Culture was being held. A three-day public event was delivered in Matera in June 2019, with the aim of presenting the research project to the local public, gathering further views about the relations between heritage and the ECoC 2019 as well as encouraging discussions locally about the programme's legacy. Living labs are an ethnographic method to explore human behaviour in real-life contexts (Pierson & Lievens, 2005) and within networks of actors (Van Geenhuizen, 2013). The concept was introduced in the 2000s and developed in particular in the field of innovation and technology (Ståhlbröst & Bergvall-Kåreborn, 2008) and media studies (Picone, 2013). The Living Lab in Matera involved local stakeholders and experts, who engaged in discussions about a range of heritage-related issues and the ECoC 2019. These discussions were facilitated by HOME researchers, who brought in the experience of other Cities/Capitals of Culture in relation to specific issues such as heritage-related participation and mega-event governance.

In addition to these primary sources, secondary data was another crucial source of information to understand how the ideas and plans for the 2019 ECoC were developed over time and to what degree these were embedded within wider planning strategies. Section 2.1 will discuss in detail the plans for the event as well as the changes that took place between the 2013 bid book and subsequent 2014 bid book which ultimately was responsible for the city being awarded the ECoC. Supplemental information was gathered online

through the program calendar on the official 2019 website (<https://www.materaevents.it/events>) and finally in the Matera 2019 “Indirizzi di Legacy” or legacy orientation document published by the Foundation as well as the “In Matera we produce Culture” monitoring report (Matera-Basilicata 2019 Foundation, 2020).

A number of additional city documents were also important to understand which projects came to be aligned with the 2019 ECoC. These included the Karrer Strategic Plan – Percorsi e scenari per uno sviluppo sostenibile (Comune di Matera, 2009), the City Structural Plan (PSC) (Preliminary document), the Regulation of change of use to accommodation/hotels in Sassi (Comune di Matera, 2016), the Land use Regulation Plan (Regolamento Urbanistico) (Comune di Matera, 2018a), the Integrated Territorial Investment Strategic Document (ITI) (Comune di Matera, 2018b), as well as the 2017-2019 Strategic Plan (Draft). Additionally, in 2014 the UNESCO World Heritage Site Management Plan was developed through a series of public workshops. In addition, the analysis of the three-year investment plans¹⁵ of the City government was conducted to better understand the planning and implementation of specific public works, focusing the analysis particularly on built heritage. In particular the analysis has been conducted from the 2013-2014-2015 period (dominated by the ECoC bid) to the 2019-2021 (implementation and delivery) period. The interventions were identified from a broader set by their connection to the planning of the ECoC mega-event and to built heritage in particular.

15 The three-year plan for public works is the urban planning tool with which the Municipality identifies the major interventions and works that will change the structure of the city, with reference to the times and resources that will be used for the realization of the projects (<http://www.comune.matera.it/amministrazione-trasp/opere-pubbliche/atti-di-programmazione-delle-opere-pubbliche>).

The following sections will provide more detail on the contents of these various plans and Table 2 describes the key steps and decisions made for the 2019 ECoC which ultimately spanned over a decade of preparation and planning. In addition, an extensive press review was planned and performed at two different levels according to language: Italian press and International press (in English). This wide set of press sources is presented in detail in order to introduce the city and a set of relevant themes to the later discussion of the heritage/mega-event nexus.

1.3 International Press raising the profile of a little-known Italian city

An international press review was performed to review articles published online from the bidding stage (2013) to the end of April 2020¹⁶. Each item was associated with a tag describing the main topic of the article. Tags were generated on a recursive basis as the online search progressed and new themes emerged. Final tags are listed below in alphabetical order:

| Tags | Description |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| Cinema | Articles about films shot in Matera |
| Community and belonging | Articles about community cultural events (e.g. Atlas of the City's Emotions) and the local community |
| Cultural events | Articles about cultural events within the 2019 programme |
| Cultural events – twinning | Articles about cultural events within twinning initiatives between Matera and other cities |
| Cultural sector | Articles about Matera's local cultural sector |
| Designation | Articles about Matera being designated European Capital of Culture |
| ECoC scheme | Articles about the ECoC initiative |
| Gentrification | Articles examining gentrification and increase in land values and prices in Matera |
| History/Heritage | Articles describing Matera's history and heritage |
| History/Heritage – national shame | As above, yet with a specific focus on Matera being labelled as "national shame" in the 1950s |
| November 2019 floods | Articles about exceptional weather conditions and floods in Venice and Matera in November 2019 |
| Opening ceremony | Articles about the opening of the ECoC in January 2019 |
| Overtourism | Articles about issues generated by large numbers of visitors in 2019 |
| Passport | Articles about the ECoC passport |
| Railway station | Articles about the new railway station opened in 2019 |
| Regional economy | Articles about unemployment and deprivation in Southern Italy |
| Tourism | Articles presenting Matera as a tourist destination (making also reference to the ECoC) and providing tourist information |
| Uncompleted public works | Articles about delayed and uncompleted public works related to the ECoC |

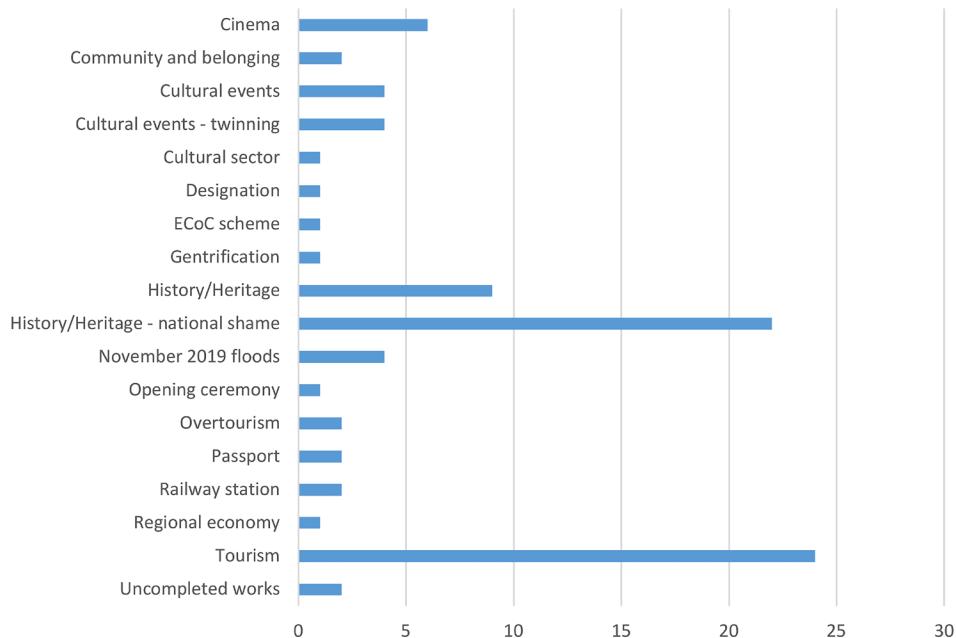
Tab. 3 List of key themes emerging from the international press review (source: authors).

¹⁶ Newspaper articles were searched using a common web search engine. Reiterated online searches made use of the following search string: Matera [AND] "European Capital of Culture". This search resulted in about 144,000 items. The same search string was inserted in Spanish (Matera [AND] "Capital Europea de la Cultura") and French (Matera [AND] Capitale Européenne de la Culture"), generating respectively 1,880,000 and 42,100 results. 89 articles were selected considering main newspapers and specialist magazines (e.g. The Stage, UK; Domus, Italy) across the world, published in English, Spanish and French. Articles in English published by Italian media agencies (e.g. ANSA) were also taken into account, as they were addressed to an international readership.

Roughly half of the selected articles dealt primarily with tourism or Matera's history and heritage with reference to the city being labelled as the "national shame" in the 1950s. Tourism, history and heritage were the main topics of approximately 62% of the selected articles. A number of articles (6.7%) dealt with Matera and cinema, for example presenting the city as the set of the new film of the 007 franchise and recalled past films shot in Matera, such as *The Passion of the Christ* (2004). A limited number of articles (4.5%) explored cultural events included in the ECoC program. These were primarily articles in English published by Italian news agency ANSA and addressed to an international public, although a few articles on 2019 events did appear in UK newspapers. A similar number of articles presented cultural events being held abroad as part of twinning initiatives with Matera, in Brussels and Petra, or celebrating Matera and its history. In some cases (less than 4% of the selected articles), international newspapers mentioned issues of gentrification and increasing land values and living costs (*El Periódico*, Spain) and overtourism (*The New York Times*, USA; *The Telegraph*, UK), as a result of the increased visibility of Matera in the last years. Two articles (2.2%) that appeared on *The Guardian* (UK) and *Forbes* (USA) mentioned delays in construction works and uncompleted infrastructures and facilities. Other topics covered (12%) included the role of the local community, the ECoC scheme, the designation in 2014, the opening ceremony, the Matera 2019 passport, the new railway station. Matera, and indirectly the ECoC, featured in a number of articles (4.5%) about flooding events that occurred in November 2019 throughout Italy.

Tourism

Articles related to 'tourism' (accounting for 27% of the total and concentrating in January and May 2015 and then during Spring and Summer months in 2018 and 2019) provided basic tourist information and advertised Matera's tourist highlights. Most of them referenced the city being the European Capital of Culture 2019 without giving any specific information about the event. In this case, the ECoC appears to work as a branding device to increase the city's visibility internationally and to reach potential international visitors.



History and heritage

Articles about the city's history and heritage, regardless of their focus on the 'national shame' theme, were nonetheless the most common (34.8%). These articles shared a similar structure and presented Matera in relation to its cave dwellings, the living conditions before the 1950s, the designation of the Sassi as UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1993, and the popular films shot in the city. Again, most of these articles referred to the ECoC as another milestone for the city, without providing any more specific information about the event, suggesting that the ECoC worked as a branding device for cultural and heritage tourism. Articles on Matera and the ECoC focusing on local history and heritage showed a different time distribution: they concentrated around the opening ceremony in January 2019 and then continued to be published throughout the year. This may be related to the fact that cultural and heritage tourism is generally more evenly distributed throughout the year.

Fig. 6 Selected international articles by key theme
(source: authors).

Cultural events

International media provided very limited coverage of cultural events in 2019. 4.5% of the selected articles were about cultural events taking place in Matera, while four articles were about events held elsewhere as a result of twinning programs with other cities. In mid-January 2019, The Times (UK) issued a list of festivals and events across Italy, ranging from cultural festivals to folklore (e.g. Carnival in Venice): the 2019 European Capital of Culture in Matera featured at the beginning of the – chronological – list as a year-long program of events. The opening ceremony was mentioned and a link to the Matera-Basilicata 2019 official website was provided. Morning newspaper (UK) issued in March 2019 a list of cultural events across Europe. The exhibition Salvador Dalí - La Persistenza degli Opposti held in the Sassi in the Complesso Rupestre di Madonna delle Virtù e San Nicola dei Greci was mentioned alongside international exhibitions, albeit it was considered part of the 2019 European Capital of Culture despite being organised separately from the official program. The article emphasised the relation between Dalí's works and the heritage space that was used as the venue for the exhibition. Italian news agency ANSA issued an article in English about the series of events celebrating the 50th anniversary of the Apollo 11 Moon landing. Architecture and design magazine Domus (Italy) issued an article in English about the workshop Geo Synchronicity by IN Residence.

Gentrification and overtourism

A few of the selected articles, less than 4% of the total, provided a more critical perspective, presenting the ECoC as a great opportunity for the city while reflecting on the potential threats arising from increased visibility. For example, Spanish newspaper El Periódico published an article based on interviews with local informants, which emphasised how housing rents and prices increased substantially in recent years. The article also mentioned touristification, as many dwellings were transformed into apartments for tourists, with the risk of transforming Matera into a theme park. The New York Times (USA) also raised

issues of touristification and overtourism, quoting Mayor De Ruggieri – whose interview was later reported by The Telegraph (UK) – who said that Matera does not want to be occupied by tourists and that tourism could eventually damage the city.

Delays in construction works

Two among the selected articles (2.2%) were mainly about delays in the implementation of infrastructure projects related to the event. In September 2018, The Guardian (UK) emphasised that the initial excitement for the designation of Matera as the ECoC 2019 was soon replaced by anxiety about the implementation of event-related projects. In the article, it was predicted that the city would not be ready for the event due to delays in the allocation of funding from central government and to the pace of Italian bureaucracy. The article also mentioned issues of accessibility by rail. Similarly, on the day of the opening ceremony of the ECoC in January 2019, Forbes (USA) stressed that many infrastructure works had not been completed and stressed the same issues of accessibility. Again, Italian bureaucracy is mentioned as the problem behind these delays.

Additional issues

Approximately 12% of the selected article were mainly about other topics, such as the role of the local community, the ECoC scheme, the Matera 2019 passport or – although only marginally related with the event – the construction of the new railway station. It is worth noting that the designation of Matera as European Capital of Culture (October 2014) and the opening ceremony (January 2019) did not appear to have generated extensive media coverage internationally (2.2% of the selected articles). Media coverage about Matera and the ECoC appeared to have mounted as the event progressed throughout 2019. In November 2019, Matera was mentioned as the reigning European Capital of Culture in a number of articles (4.5% of the total, concentrated in two days) as severe flooding took place across Italy, including heavy rainfall and flooding in the Sassi. The end of the Capital of Culture year



Fig. 7 Ongoing infrastructural improvement works taking place in Matera in March 2019 (source: Zachary M. Jones, 2019).

was not covered by international media, either. This could be explained considering that media attention shifted towards the 2020 European Capitals of Culture, Rijeka and Galway.

As expected, the 2019 European Capital of Culture meant that Matera enjoyed a certain degree of international media coverage. However, this press review shows how international media focused on presenting Matera to their audiences and on telling its story by mentioning its cave dwellings, its UNESCO World Heritage status and popular films being shot in the city. The actual coverage of the event appears rather superficial and limited to a few national newspapers or specialist magazines. On very few occasions, international media mentioned cultural events within the ECoC program.

1.4 National Press pointing out the challenges facing Matera 2019

The Italian press review has been performed considering three sources selected on the basis of the kind of information and scope they could provide and on their accessibility. The three sources are two national newspapers and one local media network. The national sources are the second most popular generic newspaper in Italy, *La Repubblica*¹⁷, and the most important Italian financial newspaper, *Il Sole 24 Ore*. They both provide news about the city of Matera mainly from a national point of view¹⁸. The third source considered for the press review is a local media based in Matera, TRM Network, which is able to provide a local point of view and to cover in more detailed way issues about local politics and development¹⁹.

The topics in the examined press sources were divided into five main categories: Overall vision; Cultural facilities; Transportation; Regional territory; Politics.

Most of the topics have been developed before 2019. During the 2019 ECoC, instead, the press mostly focused on presenting the exhibitions and events occurring. As the ECoC ended, in 2020, a few articles discussed the legacy and the outcomes of the event, but the topic substantially disappeared from the press, focusing instead on the emerging COVID-19 Global Pandemic and its national and local repercussions.

Overall vision

The core idea of using the ECoC event to trigger revitalization was specified soon into the vision of Matera as the regional hub for a sustainable and culture-based economy, a sort of platform capable of generating cultural services and products and of managing tourism. The risk of over-tourism became clearer and clearer, with the recent surge in B&Bs and tourist-oriented commercial activities proliferating in Matera's centre, while tourism and culture are considered a valuable opportunity to trigger socio-economic development and overcome the decline of traditional industries such as furniture production.

¹⁷ *La Repubblica*'s archive is open-access through the link <https://ricerca.repubblica.it/>. First automatic filtering of articles has been made through the criteria of appearance in the article of both the terms "Matera" and "capitale europea della cultura", with no defined temporal range, meaning all articles from the first occurrence of the selected terms until the date the review has been conducted, 18/12/2018, have been considered, resulting in 459 articles. Among these articles a further selection has been done considering only the ones dealing with cultural policies, events, tourism and territory, resulting in 56 articles, the first one dating 12/04/2014.

¹⁸ *Il Sole 24 Ore*'s archive is accessible through Politecnico di Milano platform, via the link <https://archivistorico.ilsole24ore.com/>. First automatic filtering of articles has been made through the criteria of appearance in the article of the term "capitale europea della cultura", since it is not possible on this website to search for multiple terms, with no defined temporal range, meaning all articles from the first occurrence of the selected terms until the date the review has been conducted, 18/12/2018, have been considered, resulting in 550 articles. Among these articles a further selection has been done considering only the ones dealing with Matera and cultural policies, events, tourism and territory, resulting in 36 articles, the first one dating 18/02/2009.

In the political discourse the 2019 ECoC was interpreted as a recognition of the value of Matera (and Southern Italy), moving from being defined "the shame of Italy" in the 1950s to being enlisted as a world heritage site by UNESCO and now being under the cultural spotlight of Europe.

Cultural facilities

The national press often focused on the many public works planned for the event. Besides a general renovation of public spaces (including the historic city centre) that was undertaken, a number of works involved heritage or cultural facilities (see Table 4, p.32, for further details). The renovation of the privately-owned Duni theatre was much expected since it closed in 2015. This theatre was supposed to be the major cultural venue for the 2019 events. The press covered the unsuccessful attempts to establish a public-private partnership or to promote a public purchase of the theatre in order to make it available for 2019. However, only in November 2019 did the municipality finally purchase it after a public auction. The other two works that were frequently the object of attention were the Demo-Ethno-Anthropological museum (DEA) and the Cava del Sole. The former is a project conceived since the 1990s, but never developed in full. Despite the expectations of having this important cultural venue ready for the 2019 events, the project stalled and was not completed as such; the concept behind the DEA museum would come to inform the I-DEA exhibition that contributed to the 2019 calendar. The Cava del Sole is part of a broader program of renovation of the tufa quarries just outside the urban centre that started years before the ECoC bidding and was completed on time. This headline accomplishment was used to host the inauguration of the 2019 ECoC and served as one of the main venues throughout the year.

Transportation

Transport infrastructure has a central position in the political debate, in particular because of the limited access to the city (the only provincial capital in continental Italy without

19 TRM's archive is open access, through the link <https://www.trmtv.it/home/page/173?s=matera%22+capital+e+europea+della+cultura%22>.

First automatic filtering of articles has been made through the criteria of appearance in the article of both the terms "Matera" and "Capitale Europea della Cultura", with no defined temporal range, meaning all articles from the first occurrence of the selected terms until the date the review has been conducted, 07/01/2019, have been considered, resulting in 1741 articles. Among these articles

a further selection has been done considering only the ones dealing with cultural policies, events, tourism and territory, resulting in 146 articles, the first one dating 02/11/2009.

a national railway service). Despite the fact that, as it was often remarked by the Matera-Basilicata 2019 Foundation in the press, infrastructure was not among the targets and competences of the Foundation itself or the ECoC as such, this topic emerged quite often. The Ferrandina-Matera-Gioia del Colle freeway, the Matera-Altamura-Bari freeway (connecting the region to Bari and its international airport), the Ferrovie Appulo Lucane (FAL) railway Bari-Matera and the station and public space redevelopment of Piazza della Visitazione, the national railway Matera-Ferrandina are most debated issues, with significant momentum gained thank to the mega-event. The connections to Bari and the airport have improved and the roadworks are nearly completed of 2020, the FAL new central station of Matera and the surrounding area of Piazza della Visitazione being completed during 2019 became one of the symbols of the renovation of Matera for 2019, the Ferrandina station having, in 2019, high-speed train service to serve for Matera and the mega-event. However, many debates still report the limits in connection and accessibility for Matera and the surrounding region.

Fig. 8 The opening ceremony of the Matera-Basilicata 2019 ECoC with marching bands from across Europe and Basilicata at the Cava del Sole (source: Zachary M. Jones, 2019).



Regional territory

In the press a political discussion regarding the role of the Basilicata Region (that Matera is part of) versus the Apulia Region and its capital Bari that naturally became a gateway to Matera and the event. Stronger synergies with Apulia and alleged self-isolating gestures sustained these debates throughout 2019, with news reporting how given cities in Apulia took advantage of the high tourist flows during the year, despite the efforts of the Foundation to highlight the positive impacts that the mega-event had on the rest of Basilicata.

Local politics

Local political affairs are only briefly mentioned in the national press, while the local media (TRM) provides much more detailed insights into the conflicts that characterised the city following the 2015 municipal elections, when the right-wing candidate De Ruggieri (a leading figure in the Materan cultural scene) became mayor over the incumbent Mayor Adduce, the left-wing candidate who managed the whole bidding phase of the ECoC. According to the press review, the new city government proved unstable and needed reshuffles in the Mayor's cabinet and Foundation to sustain consensus.

1.5 A partial link with existing strategic and spatial planning and heritage conservation policies

A wide set of planning and policy documents are reviewed here in order to outline the context of the 2019 event planning and operations. Several problematic issues of strategic and general land-use planning, heritage policy and preservation resurface from this overview: a certain level of disconnect and fragmentation across sectors and in the local governance more generally, overlooked tourism growth and presence in the historic city centre,

Strategic Planning

The first Strategic Plan of the City of Matera (Paths and scenarios for a sustainable development, Comune di Matera, 2009) was developed under the leadership of architect and urbanist Francesco Karrer and completed in 2009. The plan, consisting in an all-encompassing and complete analysis of the city and its surroundings and a series of proposals, was presented publicly but not implemented as such. The opportunity of the 2019 ECoC was already mentioned in this plan in the “Strategic Line 2: Restarting from Sassi” that suggests the promotion of heritage and the environment in order to foster tourism development. The city, with the support of SVIMEZ (a prominent non-profit organization dedicated to the economic development of Southern Italy), intended to create a Strategic Plan for the period 2018-2020 (Interview-Municipality1; Interview-Municipality2), but never finalised the document. While the City Administration meanwhile created a list of projects to be completed in anticipation of the event, this was not part of an official/public plan for the city.

In this framework, the bid book somehow outlined city-wide strategies (Interview-M19Foundation1; Interview-Unibas2), though that was not its intended purpose nor did it ever have such authority. The 2016 SVIMEZ report along with the bidding dossier was mentioned as a base for

the strategic plan in the municipality website presenting the draft documentation for the eventual defaulted strategic plan 2017-2019. However, in none of these instances were tourism development plans or policies considered or put in place to handle the expected increase in tourist numbers at either a local or regional scale. The bid book predicted a 200% increase in tourists by 2020 which the city did eventually reach and the lack of systematic preparation in managing tourists would emerge as one of the key issues during 2019.

Land-use planning

After the experience of the General Plan of 1956 and 1975 led by town planner Luigi Piccinato, land-use planning exercises have not fared well in Matera. Most documents reach only a preliminary stage or go through a quite lengthy plan-making process. Plans proved to be somewhat disconnected from and ineffective in dealing with actual development problems of the city. After 1975, urban development continued by modifying the land-use plan in a piecemeal manner, through amendments to individual development projects, until the official 1999 general modification to the 1975 plan, which was approved only in 2007. In 1999 the Region Basilicata approved the new urban planning law, according to which municipalities had to draw their new planning instruments, the Municipal Structure Plan (PSC), an Operative Plan (PO) and a Land-use Regulation guidelines (RU). In 2007, the plan-making process of the land use regulation (RU) was initiated, but the final document was approved only in April 2018, officially as a 2013 document, and without considering the 2019 event and its urban implications.

At the time of writing, the regulation consists of the 1999 Modification to the 1975 Plan and the 2013 Land Use Plan approved in 2018. Neither of them addresses the rapidly growing tourism in any kind of consistent and comprehensive manner, ignoring all the potential spatial implications associated with these phenomena. However, certain areas of the city are more seriously regulated. Particularly, all the works and operations in the Sassi are

subject to a specific regulation (L 771/86 and subsequent modifications). In November 2018, the city approved a modification to the PGdR (Previsioni Generali di Recupero - General Restoration Previsions) of the Sassi. The document provides a complete evaluation of the results of the aforementioned plans giving new guidelines for the development of the districts. The main strategic goal of the plan is the reconnection of the Sassi with the Città del Piano (historic city centre). Great attention is given to the increase in tourism and the changing uses of space occurring with this phenomenon. The last modification made in November 2018 concerns the accessibility of the Sassi, facing difficulties of implementation in such a complex environment (e.g. the provision of elevators was cancelled).

The Integrated Territorial Investments Strategic Document is a document, approved in September 2018, connected to a total funding of € 43,000,000. This document is not simply a list of projects to be realised but outlines a strategic view under their implementation stated as follows: "To reinforce the role of the City of Matera as a tourist and cultural magnet, pursuing a sustainable urban development based on knowledge economy, innovation, quality of urban space and enhancement of social, cultural and environmental capital" (Città di Matera, 2018, p. 2, translated by the authors).

Heritage plan

The UNESCO Site Management Plan (SMP) (Comune di Matera, 2014) was created by a group led by Angela Colonna and Domenico Fiore (local researchers and architects). A major component in the creation of the plan was a series of public participation workshops that involved local residents. These sessions informed the creation of the plan, though a permanent observatory was proposed for the future maintenance and protection of the Sassi. A set of broad goals are presented that include:

- Mapping project by the university
- Focus on intangible heritage, collecting traditions

- Improving protection of artistic heritage in the park
- Creating a laboratory of sustainability in the ravine (gravina)
- Developing the concept of museums of production
- Creating the permanent observatory

While completed at nearly the same time the city was awarded the 2019 title, there is no mention in the SMP regarding the ECoC should the city win or how it might relate to the city's heritage needs. Likewise, the ECoC bid book makes no mentions of the SMP and how these two documents might inform one another. As of the beginning of 2019, the proposed Observatory was not yet fully operational and only a small group of key stakeholders were organised. None of the proposed projects have been implemented and the plan has not started its implementation process (Interview-Unibas1). The University of Basilicata-Matera has created a UNESCO Chair focused on Mediterranean Cultural Landscapes and Knowledge Communities, held by Prof. Angela Colonna. The UNESCO Chair will begin working on some projects with students related to the SMP and will eventually serve as a key organization within the Observatory.

2.0 Contrasting visions for heritage in the bidding and planning phases of the Matera-Basilicata 2019 ECoC

The main characteristics of the Matera-Basilicata 2019 ECoC have been studied and discussed mostly in the Italian debate (see for example Argano & Iasevoli, 2014; Bencivenga et al., 2016; Bernardo & De Pascale, 2016; Fusco Girard et al., 2017; Percoco, 2018). In this section we focus on the heritage-related aspects in terms of the planning, governance and implementation of the mega-event. We present a systematic analysis and heritage-focused interpretation based on the available documents, interviews and on-site analysis to frame the key issues.

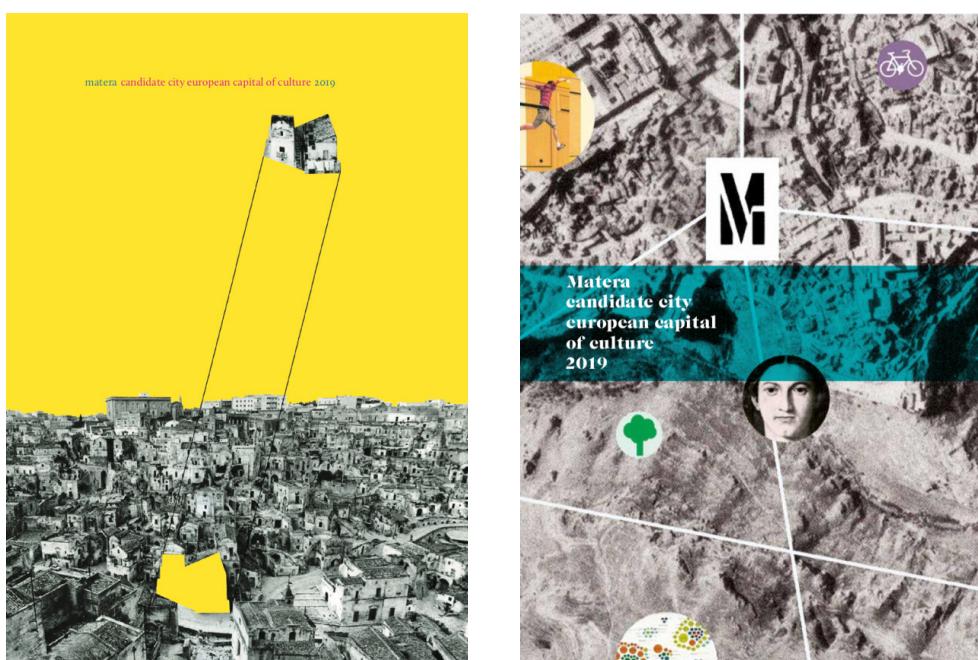
2.1 From a heritage-centric to a technology-focused bid book

As noted above, there were in fact two bid books for Matera 2019, the original one submitted for the initial shortlisting and then the final version submitted by the bidding team on behalf of Matera as one of the final six shortlisted cities. The two bid books vary significantly in terms of contents. There is a quite obvious greater focus on the city's heritage in the first bid book. In this first phase of the bid, the proponents used the city's heritage as an analogy for the residents' spirit and resilience. A clear relevance is given to heritage with several references to recuperating the Sassi, re-using them in different ways and promoting new creative companies to take up residency there (Matera 2019 Committee, 2013). The two later pillar projects of the final bid (ODS and I-DEA) cannot be found here, but the renewed plans for the DEA museum do feature prominently. Some restoration projects for historically or culturally valuable buildings are mentioned specifically, including Mulino Alvino, Castello Tramontano, Complesso del Casale, La Martella neighbourhood and the DEA museum to be located in the Sasso Caveoso.

Conversely, there is not a strong emphasis on built heritage in the final bid (Matera 2019 Committee, 2014), though the intangible heritage/identity of the city establishes a base from which the main ideas and proposals develop. The core of theme of the proposal is creating an ‘open future’ for Matera by bringing together Matera’s rich source of open data and a future of cultural production often limited to larger cities. The authors define open, as “accessible to all”; “freely available and unrestricted”; “not concealing one’s thoughts or feelings”; “still admitting of debate”. Therefore, public participation and the involvement of all citizens formed a crucial component of this bidding document (Pepe, 2018). While cultural heritage is noted as having served as an attractor of tourism in the past, the bid proposes using the event to go beyond just attracting tourism, testing radically new models that challenge the tourism-based economic model.

Fig. 9 The covers of the original 2013 bid book (left) which focused more significantly on the city’s heritage and the final 2014 version (right) that shifted to focus more on digital and open-source technologies
(source: Matera 2019 Committee, 2013 and 2014).

Both bid books specifically state that culture belongs to all and not just to an elite few who ‘own’ heritage (on issues of ownership of heritage, see Ponzini et al., 2019). The bid aims to reclaim the shame that was laid on Matera for its former



condition following WWII and to ensure that the Sassi are kept as an open and public resource for all. The legacy the bidding team hope to achieve is a digital future, using that to push the city forward for the next 20 years, though this goal is not directly linked to heritage spaces explicitly. The Open Design School and I-DEA project are framed as the two cornerstones of the bid and part of the ongoing legacy for the future of Matera.

The bid books contain few heritage-specific projects. Of those, some were realised as part of the year while others were cancelled or modified mostly due to governance complexities. For example, “Ars Excavandi” was proposed as the opening exhibition, which intended to take place in the Palombaro Lungo, the city’s largest historic cistern, and would focus on the art of excavation in clear relation to the city’s particular urban fabric. The location was moved to the Archaeological Museum and the relationship with the city’s heritage redefined. Among others, the heritage-related “Caring City” project would have created ‘sensory trails’ through the Sassi, made in cooperation with architects and city planners while “Open House Matera” would have showcased the architectural heritage of the city by opening spaces normally kept close for one weekend of the year. Such trails could have functioned as arts-heritage collaborations (Tommarchi & Bianchini, 2020) and third spaces (Soja, 1996) promoting engagement with and appreciation of heritage. These events did not take place for a number of reasons, ranging from delays in the availability of funding to logistical issues and lack of permission from the institution in charge of preservation.

In addition to cultural projects, a number of restoration/transformation projects can be found in the bid book, as presented in Table 4. Among these, only the New University Campus and the Restoration School were completed as originally envisioned and on schedule for 2019; both of these projects were planned and funded outside the scope of the 2019 ECoC. While both the I-DEA exhibit and Open Design School were provided with spaces, neither of those were located in the Sassi as originally proposed. While

heritage formed an important base for the bid and contains many references to heritage, the majority of the proposed projects/events had very little to do with the city's heritage and multiple projects were ultimately not implemented as conceived originally. While the bid book does heavily promote the city's future as an open and digital city, it does not actively address the city's heritage in terms of the innovative reuse and reactivation of abandoned spaces. The shift from the first bid book to the second in terms of putting less and less attention on the built environment and inner-city target places seems due to the complexities of governance and regulation when dealing with cultural heritage in Italy. The spread of the events and the lever of intangible heritage during the celebration year confirm this observation. The analysis of the process of planning and implementing the mega-event as well as the interaction and network among actors at different levels help to explain these connections between Matera's rich heritage policies and places and the 2019 European Capital of Culture.

| Heritage-related bid book projects | Realised |
|--|-----------|
| Open Catasto project | Yes |
| Lumen event | Yes |
| Invisible Pavilions event | Partially |
| Living the Opera event | Yes |
| Ars Excavandi Exhibition | Partially |
| Playspace event | No |
| Instant Architecture event | No |
| Caring City event | No |
| Open House Matera event | No |
| I-DEA exhibit space in the Sassi | No |
| Restoration of the Casale Complex | Yes |
| New University Campus | Yes |
| Restoration of Cava del Sole | Yes |
| Restoration of La Martella Theater | No |
| Relocation of L'Arca di Prometeo | No |
| Citadel of Space | No |
| Greenways and crossroads stations | No |
| Creation of the Advanced School of Restoration | Yes |

Tab. 4 Heritage-related projects as presented in the bid books and their implementation.

2.2 The evolving governance of the 2019 ECoC

The mega-event planning and implementation can be analysed in depth by observing the key actors and action in the four phases.

Phase 1 - First idea and involvement of institutions (January 2009 - July 2011)

The Matera 2019 Association was composed by a group of local organizations and volunteers who promoted the bidding of the city to host the 2019 ECoC. They networked with institutions, among which the City of Matera under mayor Adduce (who was also the president of the Association) and the Basilicata Region, which officially started the administrative procedures leading to the creation of the Matera 2019 Committee in July 2011.

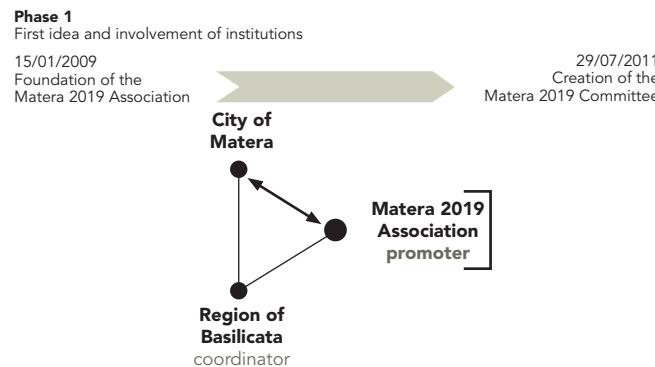
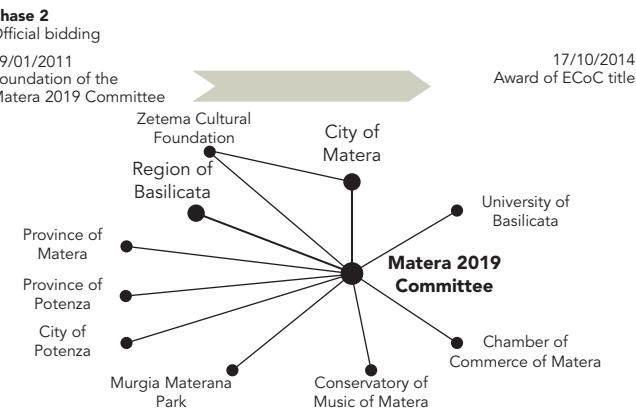


Fig. 10 Diagram of the event governance during the first proposal of the idea and involvement of local institutions (source: authors).

Phase 2 - Official bidding (July 2011-October 2014)

The Matera 2019 Committee involved relevant actors in the public administration (City of Matera, Basilicata Region at the core, partnering with University of Basilicata, Zetema cultural Foundation). The Committee appointed Paolo Verri as General Director in 2011. He has extensive experience in managing large events as he played important roles in Turin before and after the 2006 Winter Olympics as well as in Milan for the Expo 2015. The title of the 2019 ECoC was awarded in October 2014. Just before, in September, the Matera-Basilicata 2019 Foundation was established.

Fig. 11 Diagram of the evolving event governance during the official bidding phase (source: authors).



Phase 3 - Initial planning stage (October 2014–February 2016)

Once awarded the title, the Foundation, chaired by the Mayor of Matera, became the main actor and coordinator of the network (in this phase led by a board composed of one member nominated by the City of Matera, one by the Basilicata Region and one jointly by the two). The City and the Region provided start-up funds for the Foundation. The realization of the cultural program and the realization of the infrastructures were split, respectively under responsibility of the Foundation and the second under the supervision of the Region. In June 2015, Raffaello De Ruggieri led a centre-right coalition to victory in the municipal elections, beating Adduce (who led a centre-left coalition) in the final ballot. De Ruggieri became the new mayor of Matera, also taking Adduce's position as president of the Foundation.

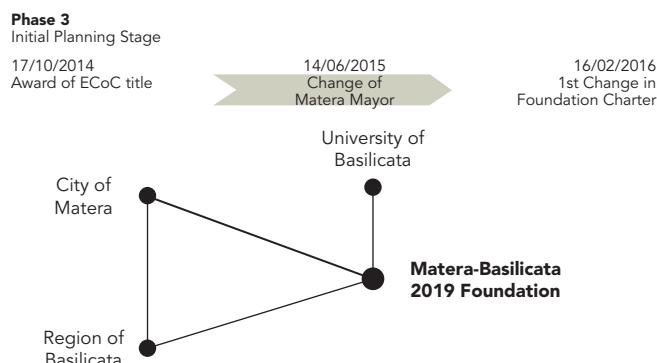


Fig. 12 Diagram of the first network of governance after winning the event (source: authors).

Phase 4 - Planning and implementation stage (October 2016-December 2019)

The political instability at the city level is one of the factors that led to a change in the Foundation charter in February 2016. The Rector of University of Basilicata was appointed president. Mayor De Ruggieri and the leader of the opposition, and former mayor Adduce later found a different agreement and (after the second change in the Foundation charter in March 2018) Adduce was appointed as representative of the City and president of the Foundation. The Region and the national Government allocated funds, partly to the Foundation and partly to the City, through different laws and financial sources. Part of the funds were managed directly by the Invitalia agency/corporation of the Ministry of Economy.

In terms of governance, the Matera-Basilicata 2019 Foundation has relative autonomy from the local municipality, though the financing mechanisms tie the two together. While the Foundation has created some partnerships with other organizations, there is an overall lack of integration in planning and implementing projects with other organizations and institutions. Several other cultural organizations have prepared their own cultural events during the year, separate from those of the Foundation and not promoted or advertised by them. Additionally, the municipality is developing its own set of goals and legacy separate from that of the Foundation. While the Museum System (part of the Ministry for Cultural Heritage and the

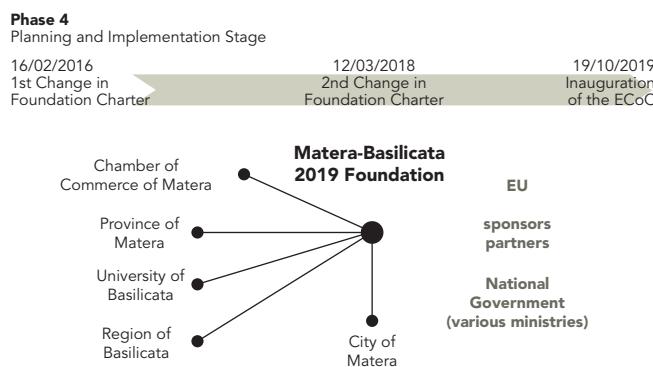


Fig. 13 Diagram of the altered network of governance after the change in political leadership during the mayoral election (source: authors).

Tab. 5 Timeline of the organization of Matera-Basilicata 2019 (source: authors).

| Date | Key Events |
|------------|---|
| 08/07/2008 | The culture/grassroots activists Francesco Salvatore and Vito Epifania first informal meeting to envision the candidacy ²⁰ |
| 15/01/2009 | Matera 2019 Association is founded |
| 15/02/2009 | The City of Matera officially supports the bid for the 2019 ECoC |
| 12/2009 | The planner Francesco Karrer leads Strategic Plan of Matera |
| 14/04/2010 | Salvatore Adduce becomes Mayor of Matera (centre-left coalition) |
| 17/01/2011 | Creation of the institutional committee for the candidacy |
| 24/05/2011 | Integrated Plan for Sustainable Development approved (PISUS-Piano integrato di sviluppo urbano sostenibile) |
| 29/07/2011 | Paolo Verri is appointed director of the Matera 2019 bid committee |
| 16/09/2013 | Bid Dossier approved by the City of Matera |
| 02/10/2013 | Official bid to 2019 ECoC (in competition with other 20 Italian cities) |
| 15/11/2013 | Matera is shortlisted with 5 other Italian cities |
| 20/02/2014 | Joseph Grima appointed Artistic Director of the candidacy |
| 07/2013 | Municipal Structure Plan (Piano Strutturale Comunale) presented |
| 03/09/2014 | Creation of Matera-Basilicata 2019 Foundation |
| 17/10/2014 | Matera is awarded the 2019 ECoC |
| 12/2014 | UNESCO Site Management Plan Approved by the City of Matera |
| 16/06/2015 | De Ruggieri elected Mayor of Matera (centre-right coalition) |
| 08/03/2016 | Aurelia Sole (Rector of the University of Basilicata) is appointed President of Matera-Basilicata 2019 Foundation |
| 27/06/2016 | New regulations on hotel activities in Sassi |
| 21/02/2017 | Public presentation of the Strategic Plan 2017-2019 |
| 09/2017 | Institutional contract of development of Matera 2019 signed with Invitalia (CIS - Contratto istituzionale di sviluppo Matera 2019) |
| 13/04/2018 | Approval of Land Use Regulation Plan (Regolamento urbanistico) |
| 09/2018 | Strategic Document ITI (Investimenti Territoriali Integrati – FESR 2014-2020) |
| 09/11/2018 | Modification to PGdR Sassi Regulation |
| 19/01/2019 | Matera-Basilicata 2019 Opening Ceremony |
| 20/12/2019 | Matera-Basilicata 2019 Closing Ceremony |

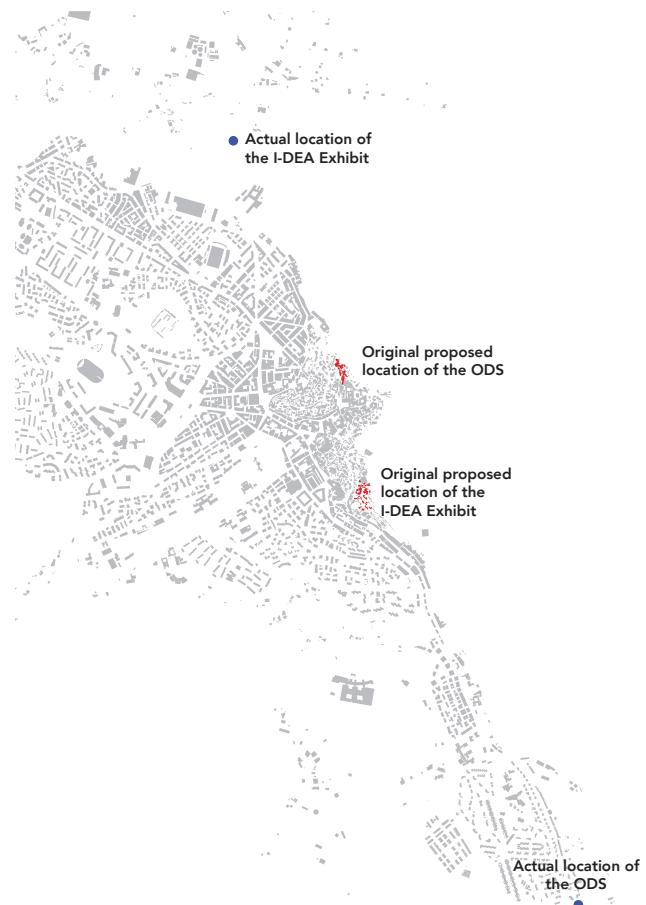
20 <http://www.redattoresociale.it/Notiziario/Articolo/614047/Tutto-e-nato-dal-volontariato-ecco-La-vera-storia-di-Matera-2019>.

Arts - MiBAC) was heavily involved in organizing one of the main 4 exhibits for the year, other groups such as the Restoration School or the UNESCO Chair did not have any official institutional connections with the event or the 2019 Foundation.

2.3 Event planning and implementation

Despite high support for the bid and the city winning the ECoC, the path to implementation has been complicated. The change in local government in 2015 presented several difficulties in the implementation of the event as it had by then become a political issue (Interview-cult_organizations1; Interview-journalist1; Interview-expert1). A scandal and similar change in regional government in 2019 meant that the Foundation suddenly lost contact with the regional council (Interview-Municipality1; Interview-M19Foundation2), who had played a key role until then (Interview-Municipality2). At the central government level limited effort was put into expediting funding or the implementation of projects (as, on the contrary was the case for the Genoa 2004 ECoC or the Milan Expo 2015). Planning procedures regarding infrastructure and public works in Italy ordinarily take 4.5 years to be accomplished, while the typical 4-year planning timeframe of the European Capital of Culture and the 2015 national laws to allocate funding for the 2019 ECoC meant that the Council was under extraordinary pressure (Interview-Municipality1). Many projects were delayed, altered or cancelled due to the resulting constraints and the abovementioned political frictions. There were also explicit efforts to have the head of the Matera-Basilicata 2019 Foundation, Paolo Verri, removed from his position along with many other setbacks in the implementation of the event. The governance complexity of the Italian system, especially when dealing with heritage policies, also affected implementation.

Fig. 14 The relocation of the ODS and I-DEA Exhibit from the Sassi area to outside of the historic centre
 (source: authors).



In terms of physical projects, the majority of the specifically proposed heritage-related projects were not completed as planned for the event or relocated to other areas of the city, with the exception of the new University seat. This was the case with both I-DEA and the Open Design School (ODS), the two pillar projects of the year, which were originally to be located within the Sassi and ultimately located elsewhere. While their new locations in the Cava Paradiso and Casino Padula respectively may indeed have spread the effects and presence of the event more widely across the city and in less recognised historic areas, the accompanying pedestrian and bike access routes that were proposed were never completed and would have made these areas more accessible to both locals and visitors. One of the most important projects

of the Foundation was the completion of a new theatre venue created within the Cava del Sole which hosted a handful of larger events throughout the year including part of the opening ceremony. While this project represents an important re-use of an abandoned quarry, it has remained difficult to access with only limited public transport options and safe pedestrian routes as originally proposed in the bid. This project replaced the proposal to relocate and reuse the L'Arca di Prometeo by Renzo Piano (a demountable auditorium originally designed to stage the Prometeo opera, that was composed by Luigi Nono, in Venice and Milan in the early 1980s and then kept in storage).

The analysis of the three-year plans shows that the Municipality had a mostly conservative position, directing most of the economic resources towards interventions aimed at the reuse and restoration of existing structures (path of the Rupestrian Churches, Palazzo del Casale, Cava del Sole, Tramontano Castle, Convento di Santa Lucia for the School of Restoration, Municipal Theatre, Auditorium in the Palazzo del Sedile, hypogeous spaces in piazza Vittorio Veneto and piazza S. Francesco), rather than at the construction of new cultural facilities. Important interventions could break the impasse thanks to the mega-event hard deadline (e.g. the FAL Railway Station, the State freeway SS99 Matera-Altamura-Bari, the intermodal Terminal in the Serra Rifusa neighbourhood, parking areas, the renovation of streets and squares such as Via delle Beccherie, Via S. Biagio, Piazza del Sedile, Piazza San Giovanni, Villa Comunale) and start construction. In some cases, projects were not completed until well after the inauguration of the 2019 ECoC.

3.0 The Matera-Basilicata 2019 ECoC and realised heritage projects

3.1 Review of implemented heritage projects and events of the official program

None of the physical restoration projects described within the bid books were under the management or control of the Matera-Basilicata 2019 Foundation; in most cases the municipality played a key role in compliance with MiBAC. Due to the various frictions among the municipality, region and the Foundation and the typical governance complexity of Italy, there was not a tight coordination between ongoing public works to restore historic sites and their eventual use within the 2019 program. For example, the Casale Complex located in the Sassi did not host the ODS as originally planned, as the necessary restorations required two years to be completed and the ODS needed to begin activities well in advance of 2019. For this reason, they located far outside the historic centre in Casino Padula. Instead, the Casale Complex ultimately hosted other offices for the Matera-Basilicata 2019 Foundation but was never opened to the public. Many privately-owned spaces which were intended to be used during the event could not come to an agreement with the Foundation and were left out of the program.

As seen in Fig. 15, the majority of event locations were clustered within the historic city centre and throughout the Sassi area. The various events for the Opening Ceremony began at the new outdoor theatre created in the Cava del Sole (see Fig. 8) and throughout the day spread to other neighbourhoods, eventually converging on the historic city centre. Unfortunately, the entire Sassi area was cut off from the public as a televised event was filmed there with the Prime Minister and President of Italy present. While the heritage of the city featured predominately during the candle lighting event and additional performances that took place

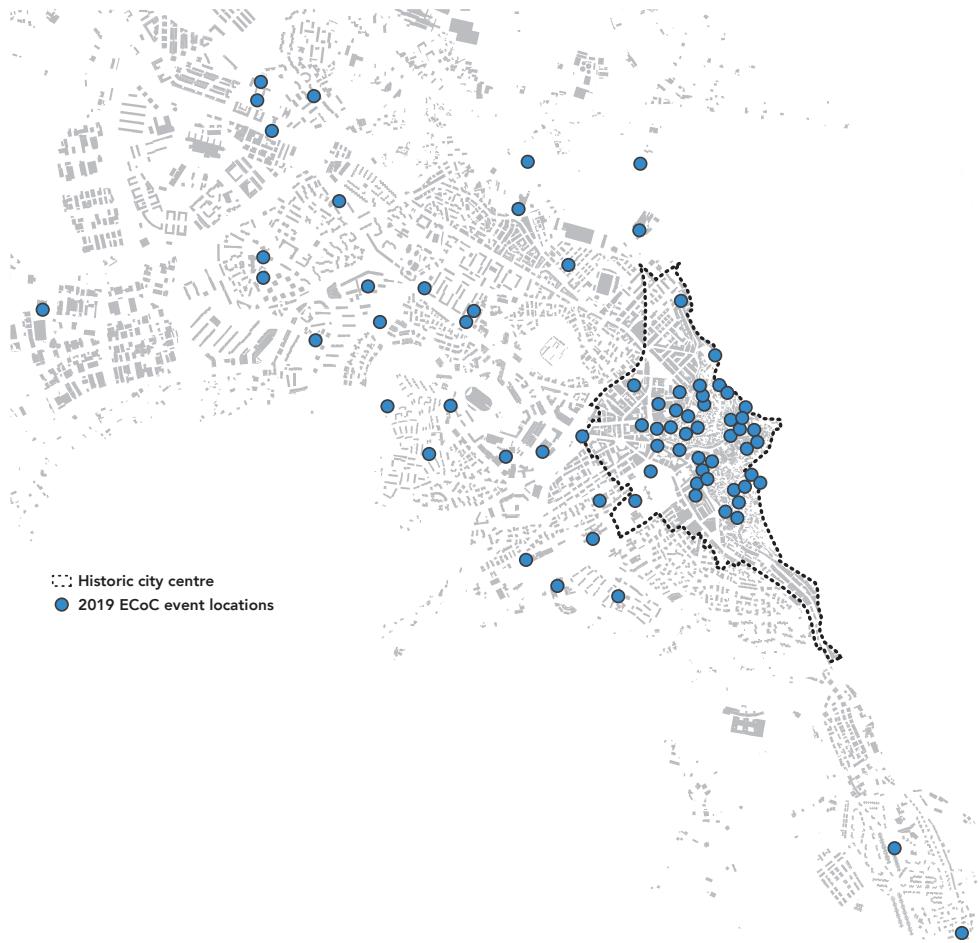


Fig. 15 Map of event locations (source: authors, 2020).

throughout the Sassi, most live spectators could only watch on screens located in several public squares rather than being able to observe them in person. Several other events throughout the year also used the city as a performance space.

This included the “Inhabiting the Opera” event in cooperation with the Teatro di San Carlo of Naples: an adaptation of the Cavalleria rusticana opera (composed by Pietro Mascagni and premiered in 1890) that included 500 local residents within the cast and was an open-air event for all to participate in. The opera was staged throughout the Sassi with spectators able to follow along as the story unfolded.



Fig. 16 An example of events being hosted in various public spaces across the city, the “Minibasket in Piazza” 28th edition in Matera, 21-27 June 2019 (source: Zachary M. Jones, 2019).

The main square of the city, Piazza Vittorio Veneto, regularly hosted events or markets throughout the year. It is most famous for the annual Festa della Bruna parade that the city has hosted for over 600 years on June 29 and which completes with the destruction of a papier mache carriage in the piazza. The park surrounding the Tramontano castle also served as a regular event location throughout the year, from hosting events like the Circus+ and dance performances in the Who Cares? Ecology of dialogue event. The final main exhibit of the year, Blind Sensorium: The anthropocene paradox, which included works by the photographer Armin Linke, utilised non-traditional heritage spaces as the exhibition was hosted in an abandoned school and the archives of the Archaeological Museum.

Beyond the historic centre, events were also spread out to other areas of the city. Notably, the ODS developed a ‘Places of Matera’ map that identifies potential host sites for events throughout the city and the region as a whole. One aim of this project was to attempt to spread events and visitors throughout the city to 1) reduce the strain on the historic centre and 2) revitalise and present new possible uses for



these areas of the city. This project was accompanied by newly planned 'alternative' routes through the city that were supposed to include some micro-events at various points along. However, many of the mapped places were not highly used by event managers in planning the events for the year. While one detailed map for the first route was created, the other proposed four maps were never finalised and only a vague path outline was provided (Interview-journalist2). While the intention was to highlight and promote some of the more peripheral areas of the city (Interview-M19Foundation3; Interview- M19Foundation4), there was a lack of coordination, events or highlighted sites to attract either locals or visitors to animate these areas. Parts of the opening ceremony along with subsequent events were held in some of the primary squares of neighbourhoods.

Beyond the use of heritage spaces across the city, several events also dealt with tangible and intangible aspects of the city's heritage. The first of the main four exhibitions during the year, Ars Excavandi, though originally intended to focus on the art of excavation in Matera and other cities over thousands of years, ultimately focused more broadly

Fig. 17 The public visiting the paper mache carriage for the Festa della Bruna before the event (source: Zachary M. Jones, 2019).

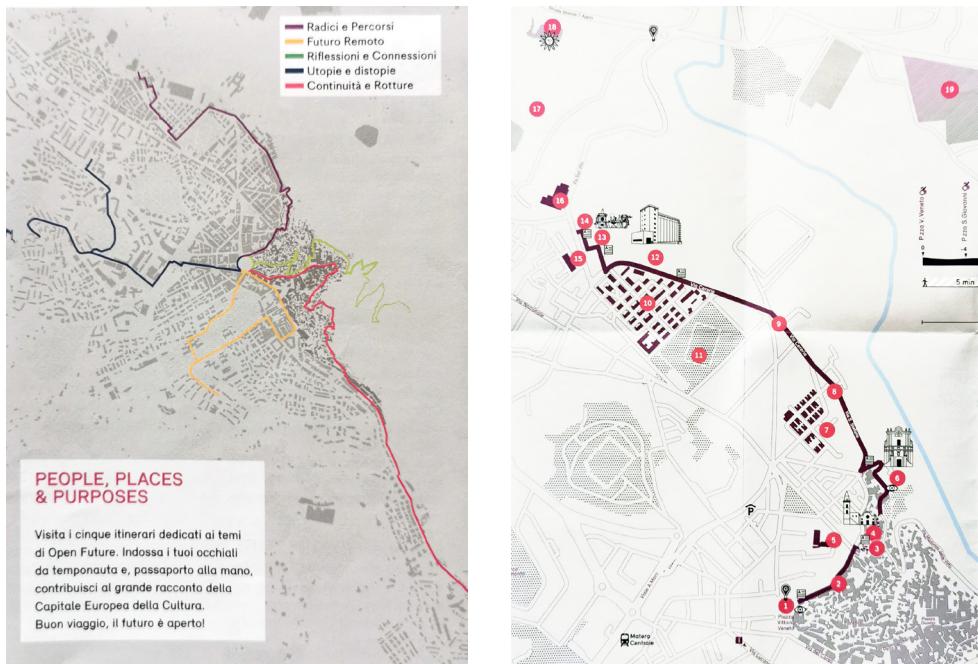


Fig. 18 Map of the proposed five alternative routes throughout the city (left) with a detail of the Roots and Routes path (right)
 (source: Open Design School, 2019).

on patterns of human settlement. Little of the exhibition focused specifically on Matera and its rather unique and quite sustainable integration with its environment. The M.E.M.O.R.I. event, located in a Rupestrian Church, featured discarded objects from across the Mediterranean in a reinterpreted way to present a shared collective experience across different countries and cultures. The Heritage Games project presented Lucanian culture and artefacts to school children across the Basilicata Region, educating them on their own history as well as reproducing some objects through 3D printing. The second main exhibition of the year, The Renaissance as Seen from the South, was organised at the Palazzo Lanfranchi and brought important Renaissance works from across Europe in contact with those from the whole of the South of Italy and Matera.

Several events also addressed the intangible heritage of the city with some focusing on the food tradition of Matera. Mammamiaaa collected thousands of recipes from local residents as well as visitors from across Italy and Europe to generate an online archive of food traditions. Other events

also focused on the specific breadmaking tradition of the city. The Atlas of Emotions event presented local traditions and activities as “mapped” by individual city inhabitants and then composed into an interactive and collective theatrical experience. One of the two pillar projects for the year, the I-DEA exhibition, invited multiple artists to curate five chapters of an exhibition using historic objects, images and film collected from archives spread across Basilicata. Through each session the invited artists added, subtracted and rearranged elements of the exhibition by drawing on the archives. The exhibition was held at the hangar space at Cava Paradiso in the city’s outskirts near Cava del Sole.

According to this overview and considering the insights into the governance and planning phases, it is clear that the aims at creatively using heritage for the mega-event have been redirected or impaired, largely due to institutional complexity and fragmented administrative powers and procedures. Many projects were redirected in areas outside the historic city centre and stimulated the use of, and the discussion about, tangible and intangible heritage (the examples of the ODS and the I-DEA exhibit are case in point).

3.2 The externally organised heritage projects aligned with the ECoC

As noted, many additional projects and events were planned to coincide with the 2019 ECoC but took place outside of the planning and management of the Matera-Basilicata 2019 Foundation. While there may have been some consideration for the needs of the event, there were little formalised plans or agreements between different stakeholders to ensure a tight integration between these different ongoing elements. A number of infrastructural projects including road improvements, the creation of new parking spaces and most visibly the new central train station, as well as a number of heritage restoration projects also were completed. By the start of the 2019 events, restoration works were finished on the Cathedral, the Mulino Alvino complex (though its

use was changed from a museum to a hotel and resort), the Ex Carro Factory, the Cava del Sole and some street improvement projects within the historic centre.

Additionally, the municipality intends to create “5 Thematic Parks” as part of the city’s legacy of the event, but this concept is entirely separate from any of the projects and events that took place during the year of celebration. The first of these parks, the Park of the History of Man, was inaugurated in November 2019 with the Civiltà Contadina (or Peasant Culture) interactive exhibition. This exhibition is located within the Sassi and is the final realization of the longstanding idea for the DEA museum that has become rebranded to fit within the 5 parks scheme. The exhibition uses a series of videos to explain the story of Matera and the daily life of the inhabitants of the Sassi in the 20th century. With the exhibition opening so late in 2019 it was not a major attraction of the year but has been intended as the first step in this larger legacy plan proposed by the municipality of Matera.

Many projects such as the repaving of pedestrian streets and piazzas in the historic centre continued throughout 2019. Additionally, a number of privately funded restoration projects were also ongoing in the Sassi making scaffolding and cranes a common site throughout the historic city centre. Restorations were also carried out on some of the Rupestrian Churches located within the Sassi, which led to their full or partial closure for some periods of the year. A project of the municipality was the creation of the San Rocco Lab that brought 13 cultural companies to establish offices in a publicly owned structure in the historic centre as part of their efforts to generate more employment opportunities in the digital field in Matera. While the municipality intends this project as one of the legacies of the ECoC, it did not become operational until the second half of 2019 and had a limited impact during the year itself.

Several existing cultural organizations and institutions beyond the Matera-Basilicata 2019 Foundation also organised events to take place during 2019. However, unlike

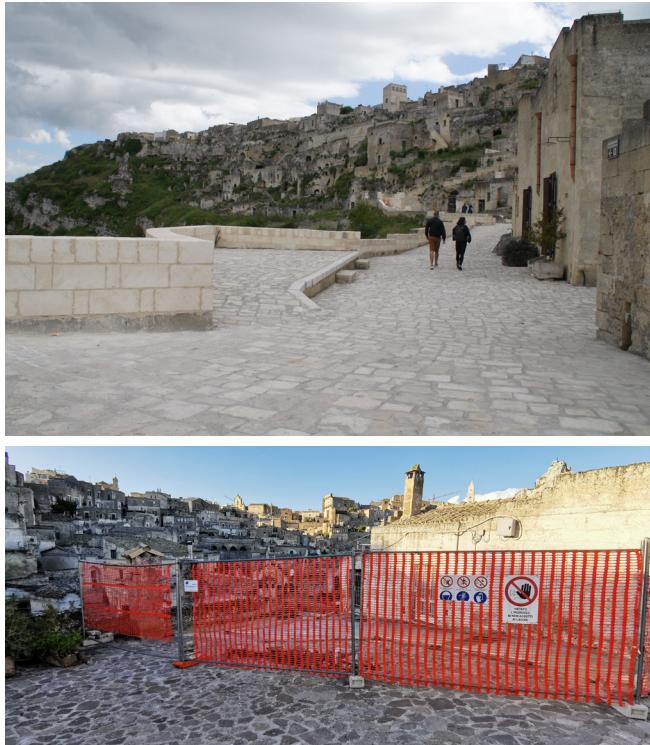


Fig. 19 Newly opened repaved pedestrian pathways in the Sassi area with a majority of the works completed in May 2019 (above) and ongoing improvement works in the Sassi in November 2019 (below) (source: Zachary M. Jones, 2019).

in other ECoCs where such events come to be included in some way as part of the official program, in Matera these projects were outside the calendar of events for the year. Therefore, they were not promoted by the Foundation so visitors coming to the city would not have easily found information about these events. Instead, they were promoted through other channels or print advertisements throughout the city. Even the researchers had difficulty understanding which events were taking place when and where, whether they were part of the official programme or separate. As a result, several of these events had low attendance despite high levels of tourism in Matera.

Several of these events were hosted in historic spaces of the city, such as a free concert organised by the World Wildlife Fund in Piazza San Pietro Caveoso, one of the main piazzas within the Sassi with a view over the ravine. Circolo La Scaletta, the oldest cultural association in Matera, regularly hosts exhibitions in the city and organised their annual



Fig. 20 Two events running in parallel to the official 2019 calendar, a concert organised by the WWF (left) and the annual South Italy Blues Connection held in Casa Cava (right) (source: Zachary M. Jones, 2019).

program as usual. In fact, their Salvador Dalí exhibition, which included sculptural representations of Dalí paintings throughout the city as well as a dedicated exhibit at the Complesso Rupestre di Madonna delle Virtù e San Nicola dei Greci became one of the most visible visual arts events during the year, despite not being part of the official program. Additional smaller venues and cultural organizations also held exhibitions and events in historic spaces throughout the Sassi and beyond. Some of these were long-standing annual events, such as the South Italy Blues Connection held in Casa Cava. While some of these events were promoted by APT, the tourism agency for the Basilicata region, they lacked a clearer cohesion and connection to the official program of the year.

The hard deadline of the event generated crucial momentum for the works and eventually mobilised heritage areas, sites and cultural facilities. However, the disconnect between mega-event planning and urban planning (and heritage policies in particular) limited the synergetic effects during

the year of celebrations. Also, important accomplishments for the city and region, the greater visibility and use of its tangible and intangible heritage, were not fully credited to the multiple actors involved or were disputed among different parties. This political break was explained through the analysis of the process of delivery of the Matera 2019 ECoC in Section 2 of this report and will contribute to further considerations in the concluding section.

3.3 The emerging heritage threats and opportunities

The 2019 ECoC introduced both a range of threats and opportunities to the city of Matera as a whole. These changes are primarily related to the mass influx of tourism that increased in Matera as soon as the city was awarded the event in 2014. Though tourism trends had already been growing prior to that point, they grew at a much faster rate following the award of the ECoC title to Matera. While not all figures have yet been made public, the city claims to have had the greatest tourism increase of any ECoC in the program's 35-year history (Matera-Basilicata 2019 Foundation, 2019). However, despite the clearly stated goals of growing tourism, no systematic tourism management or sustainability plans were ever produced (Interview-tourism_board1; Interview-expert1). This led to complications of accessibility and tourism overflows during the early months of the ECoC as well as during the peak tourism season and the holidays. Interviews revealed that none of the local institutions, from the municipality to the Foundation considered tourism issues as part of their institutional responsibilities and expected other groups to address these issues (Interview-journalist2; Interview-cult_organizations3). While there was a clear increase in tourism during the year of the ECoC, data suggests that the majority of visitors came to appreciate the impressive heritage of the Sassi rather than to participate in events. According to the 2019 Monitoring Report (Matera-Basilicata 2019 Foundation, 2020), approximately 293,157 non-locals participated in events during the ECoC. However, there were a total of 730,434 stays throughout

2019, meaning that less than half of the total number of overnight visits attended or participated in events as part of the 2019 ECoC. The overall percentage is likely even lower if day visits could be factored in, unfortunately that data is unavailable. However, the researchers' regular on-site visits revealed many visitors arriving from Bari for one day visits to Matera, leading to a number of mobility and accessibility issues making it at times difficult to move around the city. In March 2019, the city was forced to adjust traffic patterns, by converting several streets to one-way traffic only to make temporary pedestrian lanes which could accommodate the heavy foot traffic.

A clear long-term impact on the city's heritage can be seen in the Sassi where there has been a significant increase in the presence of B&Bs and hotels. While on the one hand this has led to the improvement and reuse of structures that were previously abandoned or uninhabitable, it has also led to high numbers of tourists in this part of the city and increasing costs. This issue was also coupled with insufficient provision of ancillary facilities to support much higher tourist flows (Interview-cult_organizations3; Interview-expert1; Interview-journalist2). There were no strict city plans in place to guide or inform this development in some way and it was therefore motivated by the open market. The newly created UNESCO Site Management Plan did not anticipate these potential changes nor has it or any other planning approaches/policies been able to respond to these fast changes in real time.

It is also worth considering the role of the local tourism model and the way in which the ECoC was presented as a crucial opportunity to support the local economy through the tourism sector. From this perspective, the risks associated with touristification were exacerbated by the fact that the local tourism industry consists mostly of small or family businesses (Interview-expert1; Interview-Municipality2; Interview-tourism_board1; Interview-Unibas2), who invested heavily in the restoration of their properties in the hope of benefiting from the ECoC effect on tourism (Interview-cult_organizations4). While this tourism model

has had an immediate positive impact on built heritage, it is also likely to produce severe socio-economic challenges in the years to come as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak.

The local Soprintendenza was responsible for halting some of the proposed ECoC projects as the Soprintendenza was not involved in the original planning phase and then deemed these projects to be harmful to the city's heritage. One such example involved an art installation that would have seen ropes strung across the ravine and connecting the two opposing sides, which the event organisers did not immediately perceive as a threat to the natural value of this site and on the other, the Soprintendenza was not involved early enough in the process to determine possible alternative possibilities.

Perhaps unlike in some cities, it is not possible to overlook the heritage of Matera as its history and heritage defines the city. While the 2019 ECoC did reference and relate to heritage throughout the cultural programme, in many ways by hosting events in the Sassi and other sites of historic importance, it is difficult to pinpoint any particularly innovative approaches. Several of the performance projects in the Sassi or the Cava del Sole were inspired by past events that had taken place in Matera since the 1980s. As of 2020, it is yet unclear what the long-term legacy of the 2019 ECoC will actually be for Matera. The ODS organization and an online archive of I-DEA have been proposed as potential continuation of events that took place during 2019 itself, but long-term funding has not been secured yet.

3.4 A look forward: reflections on the legacy of the 2019 ECoC

At the time of writing (mid-2020) and in the light of the unfolding of the COVID-19 health crisis, it is not possible to explore the legacy of the 2019 European Capital of Culture in Matera. However, a number of issues can be problematised on the basis of the research findings and contribute to forming the basis for the general takeaways of the case of Matera in Section 4.

Governance and legacy

As mentioned by one interviewee, the legacy of the 2019 ECoC is a ‘responsibility’ of local institutions (Interview-MiBAC2). Nonetheless, the case of Matera shows how local actors may not be willing to explore and guide the legacy of a mega-event, especially where this is outside their scope as public institutions and the mega-event delivery vehicle found difficulties in being converted into a long-term legacy company. As a result, the tardy legacy policy does not foster special interest in heritage and long-term policies for preservation and mobilization. In addition, the skills and capabilities developed locally in relation to heritage conservation and the delivery of large-scale cultural events may be lost (Interview-Unibas1), if experts and trained workers are not retained as part of a legacy policy.

‘Heritage-led’ gentrification

Urban living in the Sassi throughout history was arguably a cornerstone of Matera’s 2019’s program. While this choice undoubtedly fostered learning and appreciation of local heritage, introducing the Sassi to a broader international public, it is also worth problematizing some issues that this approach raises from a legacy perspective. First, the exploration and celebration of urban living in the area, in particular in relation to poverty and the discourse of ‘national shame’, do not take into account different narratives of the Sassi, for example the values and meanings that younger generations attribute to them (Interview-cult_organizations1). The ‘staging’ of past ways of urban living in the area risks displaying elements of staged authenticity (MacCannell, 1973; Ponzini et al., 2019) and Disneyfication (Zukin, 2006 [1995]). Growing tourism pressures on the area suggest that the Sassi may be experiencing ‘heritage-led gentrification’ (see for example De Cesari & Dimova, 2019), where heritage contributes to rising land values and where the original population is replaced by tourism entrepreneurs and visitors.

A dramatic drop in tourist numbers, attendance to heritage and cultural places and general limitation to cultural and public life have been emerging from the 2020 Covid-19 pandemic period and, at the time of writing, it is difficult to say what the implications of discontinuous tourist flux may have on the management of the city.

4.0 The mega-event/heritage links and general takeaways from the case study Matera-Basilicata 2019

Tab. 6 List of the heritage opportunities and threats identified in the case study of Matera.

Threats

- Overcrowding of fragile historic areas.
- Little control/regulation of market-driven development of historic areas.
- Limited shared long-term vision for spatial and economic development.
- Failure to capture the full range of benefits derived from mega-event momentum.
- Limited cohesion and cooperation among social actors and decision-makers.
- Tardy legacy plan put into question the long-term potential of the event.

Opportunities

- Global recognition of heritage assets.
- Revitalization of previously abandoned Sassi area and re-use of built heritage.
- Co-ordination of multiple policies (including heritage) in a single spatial framework.
- Driving cultural and tourism-related economies in a sustainable manner.
- Confronting past painful memories tied up with Matera being a 'National Shame'.
- Attempts to expand heritage narratives and policies beyond the UNESCO site and the ECoC event.

- **Reimagining Southern European cities through heritage and mega-events**
- **Fragile heritage contexts determine the level of mega-event interventions**
- **Political disconnects separate the mega-event from long-term strategies**
- **Public participation should be integrated throughout the organization of the event**
- **Mega-events can contribute to heritage-based mass tourism**

4.1 Reimagining Southern European cities through heritage and mega-events

Matera and its region have had a development trajectory that was heavily influenced by their physical and socioeconomic restraints. These include: limited accessibility and dependence on the Apulia territory that has a different Regional government from that of Basilicata; weak economic specialization and adaptation to recent challenges for Southern Italy, and the increasing importance of tourism-related economies depending on short-term Sassi-bounded fluxes. These are limits that the mega-event itself could not overcome, although the event generated the momentum and a hard deadline for multiple (infrastructural, mobility, economic) improvements to potentially come true. However, the idea of re-positioning Matera as an innovative hub for sustainable and culture-led economies for the region was not

supported with systematic actions and the lack of other long-term shared visions for spatial and economic development became a major impairment in terms of coordinating institutional, private and non-profit sector actions. The clear difficulties in ordinary planning (land-use, strategic and others) and the fluidity of political and institutional powers at play did not allow for large-scale and long-term changes to modify Matera's development trajectory. These considerations of course go beyond the heritage field. However, the case of Matera shows that heritage policy is part of a broader process of development and decisions that can mobilise tangible and intangible heritage through a mega-event. Local players should consider the contextual conditions and real opportunities for improvement.

4.2 Fragile heritage contexts determine the level of mega-event interventions

The complexity, slowness and long-term planning of the preservation system did not help position new cultural locations/facilities for the mega-event in the historic city centre and made it difficult to radically improve the city fabric and functioning in order to accommodate the hosting of the mega-event itself. This is important to consider because of the particular fragility of the city's heritage, its environment and economy.

In other terms, in a cultural policy field where there are a high number of actors and regulations in place, fewer opportunities for change mean lower risks and vice-versa. The mega-event may have been interpreted as a symbolic policy that in the end was not intended to change the city nor the political balance overall, but just distribute resources and enhance certain trajectories of economic evolution already in place (e.g. tourism, cultural/entertainment activities). Yet this interpretation of the mega-event could be seen as a strategy of more conservative parties and interest groups (as represented by Mayor De Ruggieri), fearing excessive pressure on the built heritage, overtourism, loss

of local identity and political consensus among cultural elite and groups. Also, due to the fixed-term presence (to the end of 2022) of the Matera-Basilicata 2019 Foundation this symbolic policy might be acceptable for it as well, as a few years after the event most Foundation employees/members may not be part of the local political and administrative scene (at the time of writing the contents and implementation of the Matera 2019 legacy plan have not yet been clarified).

Despite the fact that a number of interventions and cultural projects were delivered in the city's peripheral areas, Matera-Basilicata 2019 displayed to some extent the recurrent ECoC pattern of concentration of activities in the city centre. This aspect needs to be problematised in relation to two issues. First, the concentration of cultural events in the city centre, together with the appeal of the Sassi area to national and international tourism, has arguably contributed, in the medium term, to generating a gap between the centre of Matera and the rest of the city, which is a typical example of the spatial dilemmas raised by culture-led urban regeneration (Bianchini, 1993). Second, this spatial pattern of cultural activity in 2019 also meant that certain heritage assets were restored and used as cultural venues, while other – peripheral or less known – assets were not fully valorised. The Sassi area and the city centre certainly benefited from increased international visibility and at the same time suffered from higher tourism pressures. However, heritage assets such as Tramontano Castle or La Martella Theatre were marginally mobilised as part of the event. The needs for the restoration of Rupestrian Churches – and their paintings (Interview-MiBAC2) – in the periphery were largely overlooked by the 2019 ECoC program. Considering the repeated calls within the bid books and other city strategies to maintain the Sassi as a public resource for local residents combined with the continued disuse of much of the Sassi area, there could have been an opportunity to combine these goals of urban regeneration, socio-economic revitalization and cultural innovation, well beyond the increase in the use of the Sassi for hotels, B&Bs, restaurants and bars (as documented in this report). More generally, the perception of the risk of impacting the heritage and the complexities of

transforming the historic city centre (in particular the Sassi) induced heritage associations and event organizations to lower the expectations on part of multiple stakeholders and to limit the interventions on the city's built environment. The limited improvement in terms of infrastructure may leave some areas unprepared for the larger waves of tourists and peak moments in the calendar (such as the Easter holidays or the Festa della Bruna on July 2).

The case of Matera-Basilicata discloses a clear paradox for heritage-rich and fragile environments. Heritage fragility as such can become an argument that sustains conservative positions and, at the same time, that paradoxically and ultimately does not legitimise strong and much needed investments and interventions to better face the emerging threats (e.g. infrastructure and policies for mass tourism in the case of Matera) to heritage itself. Without a vision for spatial and socio-economic development, Matera could not fully take advantage of the heritage opportunities and solve the evident threats to its heritage.

4.3 Political disconnects separate the mega-event from long-term strategies

Matera has peculiar political dynamics. Parties and interest groups demonstrated to be intertwined and quite fluid over time, as documented through the analysis of the mega-event bidding, planning and implementation process and respective network. This has made the planning of the mega-event difficult, unpredictable and unstable, in contrast with the conservative institutional structure of cultural heritage policy that is typical of Italy. In broader terms of political groups and constituencies, one could see a sort of conservative vs. progressive clash as represented by the Mayor and by the Director of the Foundation. The perception of the risk of impacting the heritage and the complexities of transforming the historic city centre (in particular the Sassi) may have induced a push among heritage associations and event organizations to lower expectations on the part of

multiple stakeholders and to limit the interventions on the city's built environment. At the same time, this may have had broader repercussions as the limited infrastructural and public asset improvements could not face the larger and larger waves of tourists and peak moments of 2019. In other words, the compromises that have inevitably affected the planning and implementation of interventions reduced the opportunities and legacy effects for the city and its economic base.

The case of Matera-Basilicata depicts a situation where the political frictions and the limits in the long-term development vision reduced the opportunities for collaboration among different stakeholders and for planning or promoting events through co-operation between various organizations in the city. In this sense, grassroots involvement and wide engagement with local groups could not be sustained over time.

4.4 Public participation should be integrated throughout the organization of the event

The pre-bid and bidding phases involved grassroots organizations in substantial manners. To some extent, the push from the bottom up was essential at the early stages for building consensus around and content in the proposal. As the process went on, smaller cultural and local actors felt to varying degrees excluded from key decisions and subsequently no longer fully supported the plans for the mega-event. In the bid book, there is a strong emphasis on public participation and all members of society participating in the planning and implementation of the event itself. Several projects incorporated school children and even tourists inasmuch as they were considered 'temporary citizens' as a way to involve everyone in an equal capacity. There are few specific references to how these approaches could inform or effect the city's heritage. Yet participation had very different scopes and effectiveness over the different phases of the project, with a strong start and subsequent decline.

The smaller involvement of cultural organizations generated a widespread discontent among grassroots organizations and heritage groups during the implementation of the events. The lower degree of involvement of local actors (Interview-MiBAC3; Interview-cult_organization5) and the shortcomings in participation (Interview-cult_organizations3) during the implementation phase – which was in part due to political changes and instability – meant that some local artists and cultural organizations lost their trust in the Foundation (Interview-journalist1) and essentially kept working as if the ECoC events were not taking place (Interview-cult_organizations2). This pattern of involvement of smaller local cultural sector actors at bidding stage and exclusion at delivery stage, is not unusual for the ECoCs.

The case of Matera-Basilicata suggests that the overall process (from pre-bid to mega-event planning, realization and legacy) may offer different degrees of involvement of citizens and specific cultural sector groups, but discontinuity can negatively impact the delivery and reception of the event locally, as well as its long-lasting effects. In this regard, the transition phase from the bidding to planning phases is crucial as changes made at that point can greatly influence the eventual outcomes. This could precipitate a change in thinking about the bidding phase that transitions from framing it as just a short-term process to gain consensus and win the event to a rethinking of local planning practices that aims to be more inclusive and participation-oriented over the long-term to better identify and address the needs of the local community and the opportunities for sustainable development.

4.5 Mega-events can contribute to heritage-based mass tourism

In Matera, heritage is a strong and recognizable tourist attractor, even compared to a European-scale event such as the ECoC. However, the absence of clear and systematic tourism strategies for the long term (including

the specification of tourist targets, service specialization, an assessment of the carrying capacity of the Sassi and of the city centre, as well as year-round planning) constitute a problem. This, together with the significant increase of tourists since the ECoC title was assigned to the city, may have induced spontaneous changes that can become averse to heritage appreciation in the long term. Such changes include B&Bification, eventification of the city and the rise in the use of public space by bars and shops, as well as excessive pressures on public space leading to short-term reactions like pedestrianisation.

Among Matera's missed opportunities one can see that these pressures could have been more systematically addressed by a more unified and coordinated effort on the part of the various stakeholders and local organizations. By operating separately and individually with their own programs and agendas, the cultural heritage policymakers and stakeholders missed the opportunities to better deal with tourism fluxes and to upgrade the whole urban system. Promoting potential assets of the city to systematically spread interventions, events and visitors was an option that was considered at times but did not match any long-term spatial vision in place. This dispersal strategy will likely become more common in the future to address the concerns raised by the COVID-19 health crisis, by taking advantage of the varied range of open spaces found in cities and utilizing them in new and creative ways.

5.0 References

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Interviews in Matera

| Name | Institution | Place and date |
|--------------------------|---|--------------------------------------|
| Interview-M19Foundation1 | Matera 2019 Foundation, President | Matera 2019 Foundation HQ 01/04/2019 |
| Interview-M19Foundation2 | Matera 2019 Foundation, Project manager Scuole e patrimonio | Piazza Sedile 29/03/2019 |
| Interview-M19Foundation3 | Matera 2019 Foundation, Coordinator of Open Design School | Open Design School HQ 29/03/2019 |
| Interview-M19Foundation4 | Matera 2019 Foundation/Open Design School, Project Manager | Open Design School HQ 29/03/2019 |
| Interview-Municipality1 | Comune di Matera, Director of Staff, Strategic Planning and EU funds | Matera City Hall 01/04/2019 |
| Interview-Municipality2 | Comune di Matera, City Council member and Head of Culture Committee | Piazza Vittorio Veneto 03/04/2019 |
| Interview-MiBAC1 | Soprintendenza Archeologia, Belle Arti e Paesaggio Regionale della Basilicata (MiBAC), Superintendent | phone conversation 12/12/2018 |
| Interview-MiBAC2 | Polo museale regionale della Basilicata, Director (MiBAC) | Palazzo Lanfranchi 03/04/2019 |
| Interview-MiBAC3 | Scuola Alta Formazione di Restauro, Director (MiBAC) | ISCR Matera 03/04/2019 |
| Interview-Unibas1 | UNIBAS, Professor and Director the UNESCO Chair | University of Basilicata 02/04/2019 |

| | | |
|-----------------------------------|---|--------------------------------------|
| Interview- Unibas2 | UNIBAS, Professor (Former deputy mayor for urban planning of Matera) | Piazza Vittorio Veneto 30/04/2019 |
| Interview-cult_ organizations1 | TAM (Torre Art Museum), Founder | TAM site 02/05/2019 |
| Interview-cult_ organizations2 | Viva Verdi Cultural Association, Representative | Piazza Sedile 30/04/2019 |
| Interview-cult_ organizations3 | Associazione Culturale Matera 2019, President | Fidas offices 03/05/2019 |
| Interview-cult_ organizations4 | Circolo La Scaletta, Presidente | La Scaletta 01/05/2019 |
| Interview- journalist1 | Gazzetta del Mezzogiorno, Journalist | Via Lavista 30/04/2019 |
| Interview- journalist2 | Mathera Journal, Founder | Piazza Vittorio Veneto 01/04/2019 |
| Interview- expert1 | Fondazione Enrico Mattei, Researchers | Skype interview 02/04/2019 |
| Interview- expert2 | Local heritage expert | Matera 03/12/2018 |
| Interview- tourism_board1 | Agenzia di Promozione Territoriale di Basilicata, Officer | APT Matera offices 02/04/2019 |

HOMEE

Heritage Opportunities/threats within Mega-Events in Europe:

Changing environments, new challenges and possible solutions for preservation in mega-events embedded in heritage-rich European cities

The Project

The research project “HOMEE – Heritage Opportunities/threats with Mega-Events in Europe” is funded under the European call “JPICH Heritage in Changing Environments”. The HOMEE project brings together leading research centres working in the fields of cultural heritage preservation and mega-event planning, in close contact with key institutions and policy officers who have already had or will have direct responsibility for planning and implementing mega-events in Europe, from the local to the international level. The project investigates past events and develops new policy tools for dealing with the emerging opportunities and threats in planning and implementing mega-events in heritage-rich cities.

For further information,
visit: <http://www.tau-lab.polimi.it/research/homee/>

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