



PRESS RELEASE

for the Completion of the IRSCHEN Project (Interdisciplinary Resilience through Science and Cultural Heritage Education Network)

The scientific project Irschen took place from March 2021 to March 2023 in the context of Erasmus+ and specifically of the KA2 Action that promotes cooperation between Institutions and Organizations.

Six partners from four countries participated in the project: Austria, the birthplace of the Irschen idea, offered our Leader Partner, i.e. the University of Innsbruck, as well as the Municipality of Irschen; Slovenia, with the Slovenian Academy of Sciences (ZRC SAZU); Italy with the innovative company 3D Mobile; and last but not least, Greece with Solidarity Tracks (NGO) and the Ionian University.

The Intellectual Outputs (IOs) of the project were the following: IO1 related to the collection and research of Cultural Heritage Data (analog and digital in 3D, available in English and German) led by UIBK in collaboration with ZRC SAZU and the municipality of Irschen; IO2 on a good-practice guide for digital applications in cultural heritage by Solidarity Tracks; and IO3 on Digitization processes for innovative & inclusive education: Transformation of finds from archaeological sites into e-learning materials (available in 5 languages: English, Italian, Greek, German, Slovenian) under the guidance of the Ionian University in close collaboration with Solidarity Tracks..

Specifically, the objective of the programme was the digitization of cultural heritage and its promotion through digital tools to a wider audience both in the field of education and in the field of tourism as well as the wider society. The trigger for the birth of Irschen was the archaeological excavation site on the Burgbühl hilltop settlement, which dates back to the 3rd century AD and therefore refers to the era of the Late Antiquity. Specifically, the archaeologists Prof. Dr. Gerald Grabherr and Dr. Barbara Kainrath brought to light very important findings, buildings and objects that have outlined the socio-economic and religious characteristics of that period. In order for these important findings to be part of our Common European Cultural Heritage and e-learning material, the team digitized them and used them for an educational game. At first, the project had a scientific camp in Burgbühl in July – August 2021. It was attended by students from the participating countries. One of the students was from the Ionian University, Department of Regional Development, who participated

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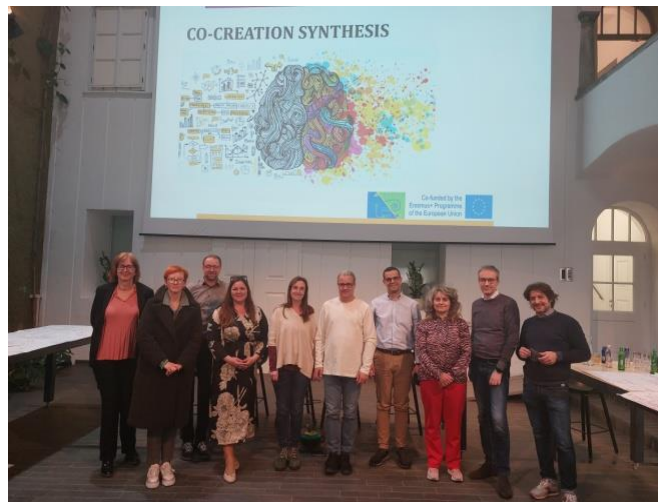


actively and with great enthusiasm for the excavations and documentation of their digitization procedure.

In the next phase, all partners were invited to participate by linking the importance of the game to the educational process through a Digital Readiness Training Seminar organized by the Solidarity Tracks in Lefkada. Also, the contribution of each partner was requested for the promotion of cultural heritage through good practices of digital applications. The results of these good practices were included in an Irschen Good Practice Guide which was written in English and translated into all 4 languages of the project partners: Austrian, Slovenian, Italian and Greek by the Ionian University. SWOT analysis was also conducted for each good practice to decide on the type of digital application to be created for Burgbühl (Irschen).

3D Mobile, which specializes in digital applications for highlighting cultural monuments (archaeological sites and mainly galleries and museums), undertook the creation of the application, via the digitization of the route to the archaeological site and, with the collection of technical data and scientific data for the findings, so as to highlight them with the use of analog and Augmented Reality.

To make the story behind the digital application more interesting for the students and the general public, as well as to enable its use as an e-learning material in a course, it was decided to create it at the Meeting in Ljubljana, Slovenia, in April 2022. The Co-Creation Seminar during this meeting helped all partners to structure the story of the digital application Irschen. It included an interface with modern reality, which was made possible through time travel to rescue the settlement's inhabitants from a disaster brought about by climate change. Moreover, after each part of the overall story, quizzes follow that help students and citizen to gain knowledge.



In the second and last scientific camp, students from all the partner countries participated. The Ionian University participated with two students from the Department of History and the Department of Environment, specialization of Preservation & Management of Cultural Heritage) who showed a special interest in

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the archaeological excavation and its findings. In addition, the educational game-application created by the company 3D Mobile was also tested.

Subsequently, at the next transnational meeting of the project in Irschen and Kobarid (Slovenia), the partners carried out a field test - evaluation of the functionality of the app of the educational game. In addition, an effort was made to transfer the know-how and the good practices from the development of the app and educational game to Tonovcov Grad (archaeological site in Kobarid).

The next meeting, together with a Multiplier Event, was held in Udine, Italy and hosted by 3D Mobile. In this meeting the importance of Irschen's Educational Digital



App was highlighted. In addition, a Digital Readiness Seminar was held for understanding the possibilities of using the CMS which was used to create the application. The contribution of the Ionian University was presented through the Module for Education, Cultural Heritage and Learning with digital technologies, authored by the Assistant Professor of the

Ionian University Dr. Spyridon Doukakis and presented by the Assistant Professor Dr. Naoum Mylonas (deputy Principal Investigator for Irschen).

The International Conference for the dissemination of the Intellectual Outputs of the project took place on March 21, 2023, in Corfu, Greece. It was an important event that attracted the attention of many members of the academic staff from the Ionian University and other Universities. It also attracted many students and the press who covered this event. The title of the Conference was “Digital Technologies, Common European Cultural Heritage and Sustainable Development” and it had four sessions representing the main Intellectual Outcomes of the Project. The First Session: Sustainable Development & Promotion of Culture, The Second Session: Historical Value of Late Antiquity: Challenges and Future Directions. The Third Session: Digital Tools & Transformation of Cultural Heritage and the Fourth Session: Special Topics of Cultural Heritage.

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Last but not least, the completion of the project required the delivery of the Project's evaluation file named **"Digitization processes for innovative and inclusive education: Transforming finds from archaeological sites into e-learning material. In the context of Irschen"**. It was written by the Assistant Professor Olga Eleni Astara (Principle Investigator for Irschen) and Assistant Professor Naoum Mylonas. All partners contributed to its editing, namely Mr Demis Corvaglia & Mr Lucas De Marco (3D Mobile), Dr. Zvezdana Modrijan, Research Associate, ZRC-SAZU, Institute of Archaeology, Ljubljana, (ZRC SAZU), and Mr. Mohamed Chaabouni (Solidarity Tracks).



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