



INT-HERIT

IMPLEMENTATION NETWORK OF HERITAGE STRATEGIES IN SMALL AND MEDIUM- SIZED EUROPEAN CITIES

PEER REVIEW REPORT



Cahors

1. Peer Review Methodology

Within the frames of INT-HERIT project there will be organized Peer Reviews aiming to review the site visits performed during the transnational meetings. Outputs and conclusions will be derived to present in benchmarking format the Peer Reviews and will help all partners to learn with each other. It will result in useful recommendations that will act as inputs for the project deliverables.

1.1. The Peer Review Process

Peer review is the evaluation of a task, a project, a policy by one or more people of similar competence to the producers of the task/project/policy (peers). It constitutes a form of self-regulation and self-assessment by qualified members of a profession within the relevant field. Peer review approaches are employed to maintain standards of quality, improve performance, and provide credibility.

The European Union has been using peer review in the 'Open Method of Co-ordination' of policies in the fields of active labour market policy since 1999. A peer review is a process where dedicated representatives exchange information and experiences on a specific topic for an effective policy or practice. The Peer Review process comprises a range of presentations and interactive working groups there are included visits to local sites where the policy can be seen in operation.

1.2. Peer Review Implementation

- Peer review will be organized after each site visit in all transnational meetings;
- An open innovation approach will be followed in the peer review process. That means peers as well as interviewers (host city) are put together in round tables to review the site:
- A good preparation of the “host city representative” taking part in the review is essential to ensure an effective and fruitful peer review;



- The LG should be invited for the peer review;
- Presentation about the site to kick the peer review session (in attachment);
- Site visit - Visit of the peer-review targets;
- The peer review comments that goes to the Canvas tool are based on the group discussion;
- Some lessons learnt from previous peer review sessions have been taken into account:
 - make sure that partner members do not 'stick' together
 - give more data in order to frame the discussion
 - present a clear view on the scope and required deliverables to ensure a focused discussion
 - ensure that more representatives of the hosting city do participate
- 3 tables were organized:
 - 3 city partners + host city representative + other (ex: local experts)
 - 3 city partners + host city representative + other (ex: local experts)
 - 2 city partners + host city representative + other (ex: local experts)
- The participants were free to select the group to join, however, in each group no more than one representative of a city should participate
- The peer review session should have a minimum duration of 1 hour and 15 minutes;
- In the end of the session, the host city representative makes a 5 minutes presentation about the work developed in each table;

2. CAHORS STRATEGIC PLAN

Partner	Cahors Strategic Plan
 <p data-bbox="181 994 389 1084">Municipality of Cahors</p> <p data-bbox="153 1137 418 1169">www.mairie-cahors.fr</p>	<p data-bbox="448 577 970 1191">CAHORS (France), since 2008, the City of Cahors has been implementing a strategy to reclaim its central importance, with the leitmotif "rebuild the city on the city". Since 2014, this strategy, now entitled "Coeur d'Agglo", has been pointing up the need to strengthen the central importance of Cahors in order to buttress and reinforce the development of the whole area. "Coeur d'Agglo" mobilises many skills and different types of action in the city which is the heart of the area. The "Cahors, Coeur d'agglo" strategy aims to reconcile historic preservation/heritage management with the needs of a living and working city.</p>  <p data-bbox="991 969 1410 1032">Figure 1 - Cahors historical centre</p> <p data-bbox="448 1227 1410 1532">Over 2000 years of history have left their mark on the city of Cahors. The city is known for the Pont Valentré, a fortified bridge built in the 14th century, the impressive 11th century Cathedral Saint-Etienne, and the winding medieval street of the Old City. In 1972, the Old City was declared a historical preservation district ("secteur sauvegardé"); it is one of the largest historical preservation districts in France. In recent years the Old City has fallen into decline as young families have moved out to the surrounding suburbs.</p>
<p data-bbox="172 1639 402 1787">Areas of intervention and budget</p>	<p data-bbox="448 1639 1410 1787">The strategic plan "Cahors, Cœur d'Agglo" preserves the incredible historic architecture of the Old City by adapting it to the needs of a modern population and thus making it once again an agreeable place to live and work. The strategy foresees the following two main actions:</p> <ul data-bbox="448 1818 1410 1966" style="list-style-type: none"> > Improving public areas: providing a renovated, peaceful, lively and modern framework for living; renovation of city-centre streets whilst keeping all their character, provision of an app enabling everyday problems to be resolved rapidly;

> Regenerating economic activities, by facilitating town-center shopping and developing new ways to shop (e-convenience stores platform) and by encouraging new working methods (co-working, fab labs...).

The main goal is specifically to:

- Bring back families and working-age adults to the city centre:
 - o Put housing back on the market;
 - o Create a socially diverse city centre;
- Develop economic activities:
 - o In the city centre: shops and proximity services as well as national brands;
 - o Use experimental projects (energy retrofits, bio-sourced materials) to develop new sectors and expertise;

The project has the following budget lines:

- Housing – OPAH 2015-2020: 2 million € (City of Cahors) + 1.4 million € (Greater Cahors)
- Improving urban public spaces: 2 million €
 - * City roads and street lights: 1.12 million € per year (City of Cahors)
 - * Roads only: 800 000 (Greater Cahors)
- Video surveillance: 250 000 € from 2016 à 2018 (City of Cahors)
- Mobile app and real-time information displays for the bus system: 110 000 € (national TEPCV grant for 50% of the cost)
- ENERPAT (demonstration building): 720 000 € (grants for 56 % of the total cost)



3. Peer Review Session

The challenge of the session is to gather an external view of the ongoing implementation plan, providing new views, initiatives and approaches to the project of revitalization of the city centre.

The peer review session was organized with 3 working groups. Each one discussed one of the following 3 areas of intervention of the municipality:

1. The revitalization of The Château-du-Roi Street

The City of Cahors and its agglomeration set up very proactive policies to support the restoration of built heritage in priority neighbourhoods, including Château-du-Roi Street. The street acts as a laboratory for the urban development public project: ‘Cahors, the Heart of the Agglomeration Strategy’. Here are tested all the policies implemented in this framework, before being used in other City neighbourhoods or in the smaller towns of the Grand Cahors Agglomeration. The focus building, located on the 72 on Château-du-Roi Street, is a very old building in a medieval neighbourhood. Till now, it was divided into eight very small apartments, many of them vacant, very uncomfortable and unsanitary, even dangerous. As a result, the building was bought by the city by the power of eminent domain and then sold to a private investor. The workgroup session answered the following key aspects:

- What you found more distinctive on this street?



Figure 2 – The Château-du-Roi Street

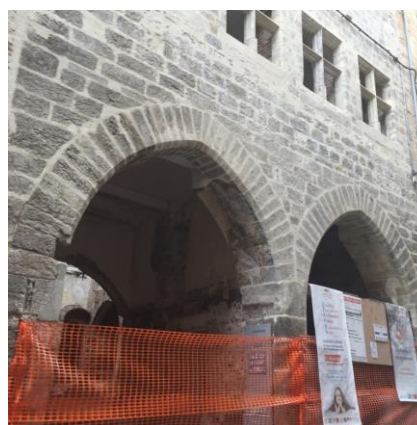


Figure 3 – The Building 72 Château-du-Roi Street

- How to revitalize the street (animation/ engagement/ citizens)?
- How to engage private stakeholders in the project (shop owners/ residents)?
- How to monitor changes in the street?

2. The rehabilitation of the “Palais de Via” building (former jail)

The former jail of Cahors is a huge building right in the city old centre. It is also known as “Palais de Via” as it was initially constructed in the XIV century as a residence palace until it became a prison in 1790 until it finally close doors on 2012, and since them is waiting for a rehabilitation solution.

It comprises three elements protected by the “Mérimée” database of the Ministry of Culture:

- the old lighthouse, which served as a landmark for the boatmen to guide them to the port, classified in 1922;
- the King's Castle Tower, inscribed in 1925;
- the former Palace, inscribed in 1996.

Peers made contributions to the following aspects.

- What you found most interesting about the building?
- Which would be the future uses of the building?
- Which public-private partnerships?



Figure 4 – Cahors' former jail – ‘Palais de Via ‘



Figure 5 – Virtual representation of the rehabilitation of ‘Palais de Via ‘



- How to integrate it the Chateau de Roi Street project

3. City Branding

The third workgroup focused on the promotion of the city, taking advantage of the public and private spaces and building that have been rehabilitated until now. The “new face” of the city together with a revitalization of the old centre is changing the city life and has increased its attractiveness to visitors and investors. This requires the development of a new strategy for the promotion of the city that highlights the changes operated in the old city centre. A lively and safe urban environment will definitely attract more residents, shops and other services into the old town, turning it into an attractive spot for visitors. Therefore it is important to gather views from peers as they provide the necessary external view of the city that will be impossible to get by just working with residents and authorities. The workgroup focused therefore in the following key aspects:

- What are the city main highlights?
- What is unique in the city? How to differentiate from other city offers in the region?
- How to promote city internally and externally?
- How to attract people and investments to the city centre?



Figure 6 – Another Cahors historical street.



Figure 7 – Wine and gastronomy is key to Cahors promotion

4. Main Findings

The Main Findings intends to highlight the strong ideas developed during the peer review activity and should be used as a working document for the city local group. The findings are based on the outputs of each table explaining its purposes and possible impacts.

Group 1: The revitalization of The Château-du-Roi Street

- **What you found more distinctive on this street?**
 - Unique street in the city, the ancient main artery, passing across the old city centre;
 - Good location, connects main attractions in the old centre;
 - Historical value of the buildings;
 - Harmony of the facades of buildings with arched entrances and medieval windows;
- **How to revitalize the street (animation/ engagement/ citizens)?**
 - As an unique street proposals should highlight this aspect recreating the ancient medieval atmosphere of the street;
 - First step should be to take cars out of the city centre; Build a pedestrian only area in the old centre;
 - Build a path connecting the both sides the river lot passing in the close to the building;
- **How to engage private stakeholders in the project (shop owners/ residents)?**
 - Build an animation plan specific for the street; for instance, promote ephemeral shops during rehabilitation works;

- Work with shops owners and residents to develop a coherent concept in the e street;
- Inform and promote the advances of rehabilitation and new functionalities among citizens of Cahors;
- **How to monitor changes in the street?**
 - Monitor economic activity: nr. of shops, nr. of clients;
 - Monitor nr. of visitors through counting entrances in historical buildings open to public;
 - Use the Urbact ULG to monitor people opinion, receive suggestions and asses their engagement in the project;

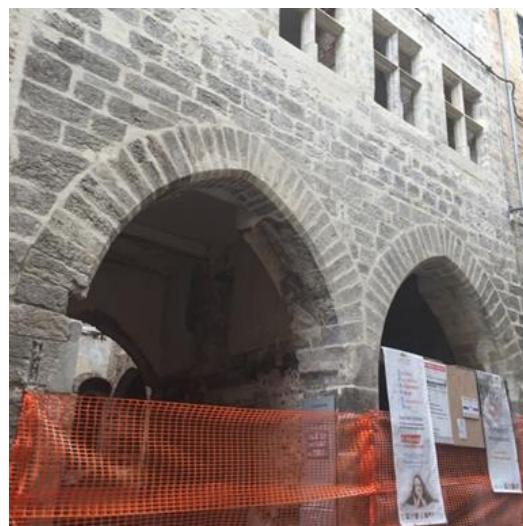


Figure 8 – The building on 72 before and now. The opening of the courtyards under the arcades creates new opportunities for revitalization of the street

Group 2: The rehabilitation of the “Palais de Via” building (former jail)

- **What you found most interesting about the building?**
 - The central location inside in the old centre;
 - The location in the Château-du-Roi Street;
 - The tower is a landmark in the city skyline offering great views of the city and the river Lot;
 - Its intrinsic historical value connected with the city history;
- **Which would be the future uses of the building?**
 - Its vantage position with great location and magnificent views to the city and the river Lot recommends a multi-functional use of the space;
 - The target group should be multi-generational;
 - It can become an anchor spot of the city where visitors could initiate their exploration of the old centre with facts about the city history and recommendations for visitors while visiting the city;
- **Which public-private partnerships?**
 - Companies interested in the use of the building: for instance, open-air cinema, video mapping (using the «canvas» of the big wall surrounding the building);
 - Concession of spaces to local associations wishing the develop activities inside the building.
- **How to integrate it the overall rehabilitation of the Chateau-de-Roi Street**

- Establish a dialog open/close spaces with the street taking advantage of the tower and courtyards in the back.
- Develop the idea of 'freedom' in opposition the close space represented by the jail;
- Articulate works in the jail with rehabilitation of the ongoing nearby buildings, creating synergies between them to create this anchor area;

Group 3: City Branding

- What are the city main highlights?
 - The medieval city centre;
 - The feeling of safety and cosiness;
 - The location on the route Toulouse – Paris;
 - The “Secret Gardens” project;
- What is unique in the city? How to differentiate from other city offers in the region?
 - The city is surrounded by the river Lot;
 - The Cahors wine region, still relatively unknown to tourists;
 - The new vibe of the city around markets, gastronomy, well-being and relaxed atmosphere;
- How to promote city internally and externally?
 - Define target groups;
 - Update branding with new images of rehabilitation and new public spaces;
 - The theme water and wine suits the city,

- The map of Cahors is in the shape of a bottle surrounded by water: this could be the concept for logo and promotional material;
- Promote the wine landscape and wineries surrounding the city;
- How to attract people and investments to the city centre?
 - The first target should be potential new residents in the old centre;
 - The structure of playgrounds, schools and outdoor spaces need to be redesigned to accommodate this new residents;
 - An integrated approach will build synergies among actors such as residents, owners, real estate investors;

Final Recommendations

The main recommendations that arose from this peer review are the following:

1. **Street Animation - Promote temporary use of public and private spaces (Pop up events):** The city is engaged in a vast plan to revitalize the city centre; a few buildings are rehabilitated, some shops open on the base floors but there's still no critical mass to induce a radical change in the life of the old town. It is therefore important to reinforce the communication with citizens to explain the project attract new residents and find temporary uses for the new spaces (even if works still go on) to engage Cahors citizens on the process. This will bring attention internally and externally to the work done so far and will promote future investments in the area. Peers proposed to create a specific animation plan for the street co-produced with building and shop owners to create a lively atmosphere and leverage the investments in the area.
2. **Business Model: Attract families to the old town (using the experience gained on the model adopted in the rehabilitation of building 72 on Château-du-Roi Street):** The Château-du-Roi Street cuts the old city north-south and will serve as a demonstrator for

other streets. The model used for the rehabilitation of building on number 72, where the city promoted a partnership with the owner, can be expanded and improved and become a model for future rehabilitations in the city. In this case, several small apartments were merged to create bigger apartments suitable for families with all modern comforts. These will be rented at controlled prices for 9 years. This will allow bringing new residents, namely middle-class families to the old town and will greatly help the revitalisation of the area.

3. **Transparency / Greening - Open the courtyards to the street:** The owner of the building on 72 Château-du-Roi Street proposed the city to open the visibility of the courtyard from the street. This creates an interesting way to expand the street and avoid the sense of closure created by this narrow road. Peers recommend keeping it accessible to public fruition where possible and promote its temporary use, such as fairs, pop up events or gastronomic events, to enhance visiting experience. These initiatives could be complemented by greening the street, i.e., promote the installation of ‘vertical gardens’ across the street and create a cosy feeling of ‘peaceful freshness’ that invites pedestrians for a longer stop.
4. **Access - Create perpendicular pathways crossing at the former jail:** A perpendicular path East-West could be created to connect the old bridge over the river Lot to the east branch of the river. This path will intercept the Château-du-Roi Street close to the “Palais de Via” the most relevant building in this street and former jail. The building is currently under study for a future rehabilitation and the pathway will run across the building; peers proposed to convert the building into another focal point of the old town,. i.e, use the building as starting and endpoint for the visitors crossing the old town.
5. **No cars! - Build a pedestrian-only area:** The Château-du-Roi Street has many historical buildings, mostly from Middle –Ages that give a sense of travelling into the past. This atmosphere is currently being disrupted by passing cars and motorbikes. The peers



propose to convert the area into a pedestrian-only, promoting the circulation and increasing the number of clients in current and future shops.

6. **Measure - Setup monitoring system:** a simple monitoring system could be implemented to assess the impact of measures taken. Some data should be collected, namely about the economic activity (nr. of shops, nr. of clients, nr. of visitors, etc) and use the Urbact ULG to monitor people opinion, receive suggestions and asses their engagement in the project.
7. **Focal Point - Reopen the former jail for public use:** The former jail in “Palais de Via” should act as an anchor to attract new activities in the area. Its vantage position with great location and magnificent views to the city and the river Lot recommends a multi-functional use of the space. The East wall can serve as a canvas to promote the old centre (ex.: video mapping) as this will be visible from the river. The dialog with the Château-du-Roi Street can explore the concept of ‘freedom’ in contrast with the close environment of the former jail. People came from a narrow street but entering the building will gain access to the open areas of the courtyards on its back. Moreover, they can climb the tower and appreciate the magnificent views over the river Lot, creating an ‘escape route’ from the narrow medieval streets with almost no sun.
8. **City promotion based on wine and wellbeing:** The map of the city of Cahors is in the shape of a bottle surrounded by water: this could be the concept for logo and promotional material, connecting wine and water to create a concept of wellbeing. The old centre will therefore act as a focal point from where visitors can grab some knowledge not only about the old centre but also about the wineries and gastro attractions that surround the urban area.



Figure 9 – An example of the possible final layout of Château-du-Roi Street after revitalization. In this photo ‘la rue d’Huisne’ in the commune La Ferté-Bernard en 2017 (Pays de la Loire, France).

*Elaborated by Pedro Soutinho (INT-HERIT LE)
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Extra information and hyperlinks

https://actu.fr/occitanie/cahors_46042/cahors-immeuble-xv-siecle-se-revele-rue-chateau-roi_17701949.html

https://actu.fr/occitanie/cahors_46042/urbanisme-devenir-la-rue-chateau-roi-cahors_16013283.html

<https://www.ladepeche.fr/article/2018/07/06/2831768-rue-chateau-roi-batisse-insalubre-renait-joyau-medieval.html>

https://lemans.maville.com/actu/actudet_-la-ferte-bernard.-apres-les-parapluies-des-jardins-suspendus-rue-d-huisne_14-3158081_actu.Htm