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**The Lab.net project.
Transborder network for
promoting historic urban
centres Sardinia-Tuscany-
Corsica**

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The region of Sardinia, as the 'Urban Areas and historic centres service' of the Department of local agencies, finances and Urban planning, has devised and is managing, in the capacity of Leader, the Lab.net project, Transborder network for promoting historic urban centres, financed by Pic Interreg III A Italy-France: 'Islands' of Sardinia, Corsica, Tuscany, Axis II-Measure 2.2, 'Development and tourism promotion of transborder zones', action b, for the programming period 2000-2006.

The general objective of Lab.net is to promote, also for the purpose of the identification of thematic tourism circuits, the architectural-historical assets of the centres in the transborder zones of Sardinia, Tuscany and Corsica and to set up a network of workshops with tasks of cataloguing traditional building typologies and as a technical support for local administrations in managing measures on historic assets.

The funds committed in the project, which started in July 2004 with December 2007 as its deadline, are ? 16,876,233 for Sardinia, ? 900,000 for Corsica and ? 852,391 for Tuscany. The expected results regard:

- cataloguing traditional construction techniques and building materials for safeguarding the local identity and for upgrading the historical assets to the present housing requirements and to improve the capacities of the administrations in the correct management of rehabilitation measures;

- exchanging experiences among the various local realities in order to export good action practices and to exploit the common features of historic centres of the various transborder regions;
- carrying out a series of rehabilitation measures in the transborder municipalities foreseen by Interreg III A;

- contributing to the reuse of the existing building assets in the historic centres with the consequent reduction in land use for new expansions;

- hosting the creation of job opportunities, through the rediscovery and updating of traditional skills, promoting the conversion of the building sector in terms of urban sustainability.

In Sardinia the network of Workshops for the rehabilitation of historic centres has been created with the tasks of studying local situations, providing technical support for the municipalities, and exchanges of experience among the various local situations. The network consists of 5 Workshops coming under the following: the municipality of Alghero; the province of Sassari; the municipalities of Anglona, centred on Laerru; Gallura, centred on Tempio Pausania; and the province of Nuoro.

Each Workshop, staffed by technicians specialized in the sector, represents a point of reference for homogeneous territorial areas from the historical, environmental and cultural standpoint.

The aims of the activity of the Workshops, on the basis of a common project agreed in advance with the Leader, may be identified as: the study of the local situations; formulation of compatible models, of sectoral projects and of action procedures in relation to the building typologies and to the materials; and the preparation of standard action typologies and of standard contracts.

The rehabilitation measures concern the connective fabric in the urban context and, in particular, the restoration of the flooring and the upgrading of the subservices, as well as the rehabilitation of historic buildings of particular interest to the local community, such as places of worship, civic markets and above all residential buildings connected with the culture of the local habitat to be used as museums or service centres for tourism and citizens.

Communication activity promotes exchanges of experiences among the various partners; it helps to acquire an effective level of partnership with the end-beneficiaries: it makes public opinion aware of, and informs it about, the project actions and instruments; it makes the most of the activities promoted and it disseminates the results obtained involving the local communities on the themes of sustainable development in terms of identity, environment and landscape. For this purpose the website (www.lab-net.eu) has been set up.

In addition the survey data sheets of the urban planning and architectural structures are being defined, targeted on publication on the web portal, and likewise the database (Sit) which acts as support for the portal. In december 2005 the competition 'Kaleidos - your city: a kaleidoscope of discoveries', was also launched, aimed at the pupils of the elementary schools .

The Kaleidos project is intended, principally, to contribute towards improving the affection of the communities for the places, making them aware of their own territory and hence making possible their participation in enhancing and developing it. Children are formidable catalysts for the involvement of other age groups. The

competition stimulates them to consider the historic places of their city and to redesign said places through the means of expression most in keeping with their capacities and with the type of subject represented.

18 classes from that number of elementary schools and the children of 3 towns organized directly by the municipal administrations entered for the competition. The prize for the winning proposals consisted in taking part in an initiative having as its educational objective that of enabling the children of the three Regions to meet and at the same time to face up to other transborder situations.

The validity of the Lab.net experience emerges in the capacity to tackle in a synergetic way both the technical-scientific aspects connected with the research activities conducted by the Workshops and the aspects of carrying out rehabilitation measures on the historic built-up area and, lastly, questions linked with making citizens and above all the new generations aware of their own identity connected with the historic-cultural assets.

This makes it possible to envisage a continuation of the project also in future years given that the network of Lab.net workshops is becoming, at regional level, a model of governance for the theme of regenerating historic sectors.