

**SUSTAINABLE  
DEVELOPMENT  
CULTURE  
TRADITIONS  
JOURNAL**

**SPECIAL VOLUME (Volume 1a / 2025)**

**INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE**

**Digital Technologies, Common European Cultural Heritage, and Sustainable  
Development**

**Conference Proceedings, March 2023, Corfu**



[www.sdct-journal.com](http://www.sdct-journal.com)

**ISSN 2241-4010**

---

The *Sustainable Development, Culture, Traditions Journal* aims to promote research in the fields of sustainable development and cultural heritage. Development and heritage are to be understood broadly, both as representations of culture and tradition through centric or dominant historic constructs, and as instances of locally constituted popular traditions. The journal publishes two issues per year, in English. Submissions are evaluated by two reviewers, selected on the basis of their respective subject areas.

Joseph Stefanou  
*Professor Emeritus, National Technical University of Athens, Greece*  
*Head of the Syros Institute*

---

## **EDITOR-IN-CHIEF**

**Mitoula Roido** Harokopio University (HUA), Greece

## **QUEST EDITOR**

**Olga Eleni Astara** Ionian University, Greece

## **EDITORIAL BOARD**

<b>Angelidis Minas</b>	National Technical University of Athens, Greece
<b>Beriatos Elias</b>	University of Thessaly, Greece
<b>Botsiou Konstantina</b>	University of Piraeus, Greece
<b>Briasouli - Kapetanaki Eleni</b>	University of the Aegean, Greece
<b>Coccosis Harry</b>	University of Thessaly, Greece
<b>Crescenzi Edith</b>	Ecole Nationale Supérieure d'Architecture de Paris La Villette, France
<b>Darzendas John</b>	University of the Aegean, Greece
<b>Halkos George</b>	University of Thessaly, Greece
<b>Hatzopoulos Vasilis</b>	Democritus University of Thrace, Greece
<b>Kaldis Panagiotis</b>	University of Western Attica, Greece
<b>Karagiannis Stefanos</b>	Panteion University of Social and Political Sciences, Greece
<b>Kosmopoulos Panos</b>	Democritus University of Thrace, Greece
<b>Lettinga Gatzé</b>	Wageningen University & Research, Netherlands
<b>Maravegias Napoleon</b>	National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, Greece
<b>Moraitis Constantinos</b>	National Technical University of Athens, Greece
<b>Panagiotopoulos Themistoklis</b>	University of Piraeus, Greece
<b>Panetsos Georgios</b>	University of Patras, Greece
<b>Patargias Panagiotis</b>	University of Peloponnese, Greece
<b>Pinagli Gabriela</b>	Università degli Studi di Firenze, Italy
<b>Psycharis Yannis</b>	Panteion University of Social and Political Sciences, Greece
<b>Rimbert Sylvie</b>	Louis Pasteur University Institute of Technology, France
<b>Robin Cristelle</b>	Ecole Nationale Supérieure d'Architecture de Paris La Villette, Greece
<b>Serraos Konstantinos</b>	National Technical University of Athens, Greece
<b>Spiliopoulou Ioanna</b>	University of Peloponnese, Greece
<b>Stathakopoulos Panos</b>	Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece
<b>Terkenli Theano</b>	University of the Aegean, Greece
<b>Theodoropoulou Eleni</b>	Harokopio University (HUA), Greece
<b>Touliatos Panagiotis</b>	National Technical University of Athens, Greece
<b>Tramonti Ulisse</b>	Università degli Studi di Firenze, Italy
<b>Tripodakis Alexandros</b>	Technical University of Crete, Greece
<b>Veremis Thanos</b>	National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, Greece
<b>Zerefos Christos</b>	National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, Greece

NAME

AFFILIATION

## **ADVISORY BOARD**

**Economou Agisilaos** National Technical University of Athens, Greece

## **COPY EDITORS**

**Kostakis E. Ioannis** Harokopio University (HUA), Greece

**Passas Xenophontas** Harokopio University (HUA), Greece

## **PUBLICATION SUPPORT**

**Papavasileiou Angelos** Harokopio University (HUA), Greece

**Petridis Dimitrios** Harokopio University (HUA), Greece

## **SECRETARIAT**

**Vasilara Archontoula** National Technical University of Athens, Greece

## **WEBSITE ADMINISTRATION**

**Michalakelis Christos** Harokopio University (HUA), Greece

**Chatzithanasis Giorgos** Harokopio University (HUA), Greece

## **CONTACT:**

[www.sdct-journal.com](http://www.sdct-journal.com), email: [info@sdct-journal.com](mailto:info@sdct-journal.com), tel.: +30 210 9549213

Harokopio University (HUA), 70 Eleftheriou Venizelou Avenue, Kallithea, 176 71, Greece

## **SPECIAL VOLUME**

### **INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE**

#### **Digital Technologies, Common European Cultural Heritage, and Sustainable Development**

#### **Conference Proceedings, March 2023, Corfu**

In this special issue, the most important papers presented in the conference "The Digital Technologies, Common European Cultural Heritage and Sustainable Development", in relation to the Irschen project, are published as Digital Proceedings. I am grateful to Professor Roido Mitoula for her assistance in raising awareness and disseminating the intellectual outputs of this research project!

To maintain consistency with the Irschen project, I would like to mention all of the project partners!

First and foremost, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Dr. Naoum Mylonas, Assistant Professor in the Department of Tourism at Ionian University, who served as the Deputy Supervisor for the Irschen project. He provided overall supervision, acted as a catalyst in the conference's organization, and demonstrated excellent skills and work ethics in every facet of our collaboration!

Dr. Spyridon Doukakis, Assistant professor in the Informatics Department at Ionian University, has been a huge assistance with the project's deliverables! He also demonstrated excellent work ethic and is an empathetic partner!

The "heart" of the project and the driving force behind its inception were Dr. Gerald Grabherr, Coordinator and Associate Professor in the Department of Archaeologies at the University of Innsbruck, and Dr. Barbara Kainrath who is also a researcher/ professor at the same university. Both of them are excellent scientists and individuals.

Dr. Zvezdana Mordijan, Research Associate, of Institute of Archaeology at ZRC-SAZU in Ljubljana was also an excellent expert and amiable partner in the Irschen project!

Mrs. Agata Tomazic, also of the ZRC-SAZU, was a partner, who possesses both a tender heart and an impartial mind!

Mr. Mohamed Chaabouni founder of the Non Governmental Organization "Solidarity Tracks" at Lefkada's, exudes kindness and generosity!

Mr. Demis Covargia and Mr. Luca De Marco of Mobile 3D Organization were also very accurate and consistent at creating the appropriate application for the project,

Mr. Peter Sommer a representative from the Municipality of Irschen's and a project partner, provided the Municipality's perspective.

Mrs. Martina Linzer, Gain & Sustain, Irschen Project Management, played a valuable and critical role for the Projects deliverable, and was always constantly willing to lend a hand and attempt to advise us on how to run the project in order to achieve the best outcomes!

Professor Dr. Roido Mitoula, Head of the Department of Economics and Sustainable Development at Harokopio University Athens, was our keynote speaker and gave an intriguing presentation!

Professor Roland Steinacher from the University of Innsbruck's Department of Archaeologies, who connected late antiquity to ancient antiquity and the Byzantine era, provided us with an insightful history lesson!

Professor Aggelakos Konstantinos. of the Ionian University's Department of History, Dr. Kourgiantakis, Charalampos., Laboratory Teaching Staff, and Dr. Pouliasis, Efstathios.,

also of the Department of History, gave us crucial information about oral history and its role in preserving cultural heritage!

Dr. Andreas Kapetanios, Assistant Professor in the History Department at Ionian University, helped us realize that multiple perspectives of a person, place, event, or discovery can contain hidden gems!

The amazing hologrammatic Corfu application was presented to us by Dr. Yannis Deligiannis, Associate Professor, Department of Audio & Visual Arts, Ionian University, with Dr. Efi Poulimenou who is a Teaching Fellow in the Department of Tourism at Ionian University!

Not to be forgotten are Dr. Aristotelis Martinis, Associate Professor in the Environment Department at Ionian University, and Dr. Georgia Trakala, also in the Environment Department at Ionian University, who gave us some insight into Thessaly's rich cultural past.

Dr. Olga Eleni Astara  
Supervisor of the Irschen project  
Associate Professor  
Department of Regional Development  
Ionian Universtiy

---

---

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

---

---

	page
<b>CITY BRANDING AND CULTURAL ROUTES. CASE STUDIES FROM GREECE AND ABROAD.</b>	<b>1</b>
<hr/>	
Professor Roido Mitoula	
<b>SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT &amp; CULTURAL HERITAGE WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES EDUCATION. CASE STUDY: THE IRSCHEN PROJECT</b>	<b>10</b>
<hr/>	
Dr. Olga Eleni Astara, Dr. Naoum Mylonas, Dr. Spyros Doukakis	
<b>ORAL TESTIMONIES AND DIGITAL REALITY IN HISTORY TEACHING</b>	<b>23</b>
<hr/>	
Professor Konstantinos Aggelakos, Dr. Charalampos Kourgiantakis, Dr Efstathios Pouliasis	
<b>DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES, TOURISM AND CULTURAL HERITAGE: THE CASE OF HOLOGRAMMATIC CORFU</b>	<b>36</b>
<hr/>	
Associate Professor Dr. Ioannis Deliyannis, Dr. Sofia Maria Poulimenou	
<b>LATE ANTIQUE SETTLEMENT OF SLOVENIA.</b>	<b>45</b>
<hr/>	
Dr. Zvezdana Modrijan	
<b>EMBODIED TOPOI; NOT ANOTHER CLICK ON THE (DIGITAL) WALL.</b>	<b>55</b>
<hr/>	
Dr. Andreas Kapetanios	
<b>THE CONTRIBUTION OF ENVIRONMENTAL &amp; CULTURAL ROUTES TO ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION. THE CASE OF LAKE KARLA &amp; MAYROBOUNIO (THESSALY/GREECE)</b>	<b>78</b>
<hr/>	
Dr. Georgia Trakala, Professor Aristotelis Martinis, Professor Achilleas Tsiroukis	

## **CITY BRANDING AND CULTURAL ROUTES. CASE STUDIES FROM GREECE AND ABROAD.**

DOI: 10.26341/issn.2241-4010-2025-1a-1

**Roido Mitoula**

*Professor, Department of Economics and Sustainable Development, Harokopio University of Athens*

[mitoula@hua.gr](mailto:mitoula@hua.gr)

### **Abstract**

*The elements of the natural environment and the components of the cultural heritage are important factors in attracting visitors and entrepreneurship to a place. In the context of city branding, culture has become a key resource from which to derive the central ideas and narrative necessary to revive a place. Central ideas and this narrative are often seen as connecting a place's natural assets and living culture. In this context, the creation and establishment of cultural routes in the cities, contributes to the promotion of their culture. Through an organized framework, it is possible to visit the basic cultural elements and highlight the special elements of the city's culture, which differentiate it from all the others. Cultural routes today are a tool used by many cities in their efforts to promote their particular city branding.*

*From the examples of cities mentioned in this paper, it appears that today, many cities worldwide are trying to develop an effective brand. Famous and successful cities are usually associated with tourist destinations, entertainment events, cultural festivals and investment promotion. Through these examples, the crucial role of utilizing and highlighting the special cultural heritage of each city can be seen. The need for the preservation and dissemination of the cultural heritage is therefore underlined in order to ensure the sustainability of the city. In this effort, the establishment of cultural routes as a contributing factor.*

**Keywords:** *cultural heritage; city's culture; cultural routes; city branding*

### **Introduction**

The use of culture and cultural heritage has recently become one of the most important trends in city marketing and city branding. The relationship between culture and city marketing stems mainly from the dependence of the city's image on its cultural past and present. It also stems from the dependence of the city brand on the hidden and overt identities of the city (Kavaratzis, 2011). The use of culture as a means to achieve wider social and economic goals is nowhere more evident than in cities (Griffiths, 2006).

In the current era of globalization and marketing, many cities have turned to culture as a preferred means of gaining competitive advantage. Across Europe, North America and elsewhere, cities have embarked on strategies to exploit their cultural assets and strengthen regional identity, with the aim of attracting affluent visitors and boosting local development and regeneration (Griffiths, 2006).

This growing trend has been mainly influenced by the fact that for city branding there are two critical elements that link it to culture. The first is the importance of the city's image and its power to influence even the shaping of the city itself. The second is the heavy reliance of city branding on city identity. At the same time, the contribution of tourism to development, and especially its broad implications for economic development, are taken into account very

seriously. As cultural destinations are very often urban destinations, most cities have the ability and opportunities to highlight their cultural offering in order to stand out. This is associated with leisure and entertainment, as well as business visitors or visitors to a city for a conference. For both of these sectors, urban centres present strong advantages. However, there are also citizens of the city itself who act as tourists and "demand" recreation (Kavaratzis, 2005).

The above trends motivate the cities to make use of all their potential for promotion, in order to satisfy the needs of "external" and "internal" tourists. In this context, the culture of the city plays a very important role. Through creative and cultural activities, events and spaces, cities aim to attract new visitors, residents and businesses. Therefore, many city advertising campaigns focus more and more on distinctive cultural, entertainment, leisure and shopping possibilities available in today's consumer society (Biçakçi, 2012).

Culture is now seen as the "magic" substitute for all the lost factories and warehouses, and as a tool that will create a new urban image, making the city more attractive to mobile capital and mobile professional workers. Therefore, cities, through culture, benefit by achieving economic goals (Biçakçi, 2012).

The main objective of cultural branding of cities is to create in the minds of existing and potential visitors and the public, connections with the wealth of cultural and artistic heritage and the variety of recreational services of the city. The power of projection is based on the fact that it can create strong associations, giving almost everything that happens in the city a symbolic value beyond its functional value (Alexa, 2012).

With local identity becoming a key concern of cities today, culture, apart from landscape features, is the only local asset that can give a city a unique distinctiveness. While urban infrastructure, as well as consumer products, food and major cultural events, are increasingly converging in style globally, cultural content continues to be perhaps the last means of differentiating a city's local identity (Kunzmann, 2004).

The use of culture in defining the identity of cities goes beyond historical monuments, ancient heritage to include "creative heritage". The definition of culture that best fits the city's developmental goals is closer to an anthropological definition of culture as a "way of life" than the aesthetic definition of culture as art, because culture reinforces the identity, both of the city itself and of its inhabitants, who are also the ones who make it real and alive (Alexa, 2012).

Scott (2000) notes that many cities have demonstrated the ability to create culture in the form of art, ideas, styles and ways of life and have achieved high levels of economic innovation and growth.

Considering the above ability of cities to produce culture as well as the ability of culture to make cities different from each other, it seems that culture and cultural heritage, play an important role in city branding. The degree of attraction and competitiveness of a city depends on its cultural resources and its developing level of culture. After all, a lively cultural life is one of the basic conditions for the promotion of a city (Zhuanqing, 2010).

### **City Branding and tourism development**

In the context of global competition, the main objective of cities is to increase their competitiveness. Many cities implement strategies in order to become a centre of attraction and become sustainable and able to compete with others (Popoli, 2017).

When competitive pressure in both local and foreign markets is taken into account, the increasing importance of adapting branding techniques to cities in theoretical and practical dimensions can be better understood (Hanna and Rowley, 2008). The strategies applied to

promote the brand of products can be applied, to a large extent, to cities ([García, Gómez and Molina, 2012](#)). Therefore, today marketing and brand management are not only suitable for products and services, but also used for city marketing and city branding ([Freire, 2009](#)).

City branding is closely related to city marketing. Despite the close relationship between these two concepts, some differences are worth noting. The application of city marketing is defined as the coordinated use of marketing tools supported by a common customer-oriented philosophy to create, communicate, deliver and exchange urban offers that are of value to the city's customers and the city's community in general. All of the above can be made possible through city branding. Consequently, the applicability of city marketing must be considered in conjunction with city branding ([Popoli, 2017](#)).

In simple terms, city branding is the application of the tool used to brand products in cities ([Kavaratzis and Ashworth, 2006](#)). [O'Leary and Iredal \(1976\)](#) who first referred to the concept of city branding, define it as a set of activities designed to create positive attitudes and behaviours towards different geographical locations. City branding can alternatively be defined as the indication of activities presented by cities that "pretend" to be a center of attraction for existing and potential customers and aim to create a positive perception in people's minds, adding value to any type of production about the city and its inhabitants by implementing strategic branding of products and services in cities ([Popoli, 2017](#)).

Many more researchers have contributed to the explanation of the city branding concept with their definitions. [Nickerson and Moisey \(1999\)](#) emphasize that city branding creates a relationship between people and the image of their city. [Hall \(1999\)](#) argues that the main objective of city branding is to provide a consistent and focused communication strategy. [Cai \(2002\)](#) argues that city branding means choosing a stable combination of branding factors with the establishment of a positive image in order to gain recognition and differentiation with the city as a destination. Brand factors include, but are not limited to, names, terms, marks, logos, design, symbols, slogans and/or a combination of the above. Among them the name is the priority. [Rainisto \(2003\)](#) states that city branding is a method to increase the attraction of a city. The key point is to establish the recognition of the city. [Julier \(2005\)](#) says that city branding is considered an effort to create and enrich the properties of the city.

One of the most comprehensive definitions has been proposed by [Zenker and Braun \(2010\)](#), who define city branding as all associations formed visually, verbally and behaviourally in the minds of consumers and which are shaped by the overall design of the city through the goals, communications, values and culture of its stakeholders. As seen in the definitions, it is quite clear and common that city branding is created in people's minds ([Popoli, 2017](#)).

Once a city has established its own brand, it can achieve various advantages, such as serving as an attractive place for visitors, a calm urban life for residents, and an accelerating industrial and commercial area for investors and entrepreneurs. For this reason, the importance and meaning of creating a city brand must be addressed through the stakeholders in a city ([Popoli, 2017](#)).

Collectively, city branding contributes to urban development and serves as a tool to improve the economic, social, etc. state of the city. Thus, city branding is a central activity in city management and one of the most discussed topics among managers of a place. Its main objective is to launch new campaigns that will attract the local population, tourists and investors in order to bring money to the city, improve its image worldwide and emphasize its distinctive identity. The city can develop multiple brands for each different target audience, when for example targeting tourists or funding the city or attracting investment. The city brand can serve as a general term covering all the features of city life and activities ([Ashworth and Kavaratzis, 2007](#)).

## The success of city branding

Middleton (2011) summarizes seven principles for successful city branding:

1. Embedding a clear, distinctive, ambitious yet realistic brand positioning and personality
2. Branding based on the values, attitudes, behaviours and characteristics of the population
3. Articulating a clear city strategy with points of emphasis related to the skills, resources and capabilities of the city
4. Effective adaptation to deliver benefits to target groups
5. Successful communication of city branding to internal influencers
6. Effective integration of city branding into various marketing communication media
7. Consistency over time.

An effective city branding strategy requires a clear vision for the future of the city and a coherent strategy for the development of the city brand. Effective policy implementation and communication of progress to both internal and external audiences is further needed (Dinnie, 2010). Branding starts with an invisible value and philosophy, not just a logo and a symbol. Of course, the logo and tagline are important branding tools, but they are not enough to achieve successful brands. The value and philosophy of a brand are those that cannot be easily imitated.

If the brand only focuses on the visible, it will fail. Because values and philosophy transcend the product and services, it is clear that customers make comprehensive decisions based on these values and brand philosophy. Similarly, the city branding of the city should also reflect its values and philosophy. No one would pay attention or be loyal to a slogan without a philosophy (Lim, 2016).

In the same context, Oh (2010) argues that city branding should include content that tells people what a city is, or how people can experience the city directly, since a purely advertising slogan cannot magically establish the image and reputation of the city.

## City branding examples

In recent years, many cities have been implementing marketing and branding plans. Most of them focus on their positive characteristics and highlight their strengths, with the aim of attracting visitors, investors etc. Cities such as Amsterdam, Paris or Barcelona implement successful strategies so far, given that are popular touristic destinations. Some examples of cities follow below.

Amsterdam adopted the "I am Amsterdam" logo, which was considered a success, since it is easily understood, memorable and includes the name of the city (Kavaratzis & Ashworth, 2008).



**Figure 1** Amsterdam logo  
(found: <https://bit.ly/2YdctXj>)

Similarly, Groningen was associated with the marketing strategy, which was designed around the slogan "Nothing over Groningen", using as the logo the first letter of the city ("G").

The overall strategy succeeded in reversing the negative image of the city and the wider region ([www.visit groningen.nl](http://www.visit groningen.nl)).



**Figure 2** Groningen logo  
(found: <https://bit.ly/2Y3Rouc>)

Barcelona is characterized as one of the most successful examples of city branding. The effort of the city peaked with the hosting of the Olympic Games and has already adopted several successful slogans and logos.



**Figure 3** Barcelona Inspira  
(found: <https://bit.ly/30MoZut>)

Paris is internationally recognized as one of the largest tourist destinations and its logo is quite efficient as well as chic giving the “air” of the city.



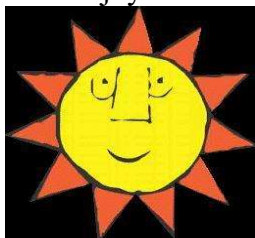
**Figure 4** Paris logo  
(found: <https://bit.ly/2Z2CsOr>)

The "Genoa Urban Lab" logo is the main element of the name of the city of Genoa. The slogan is easy for everyone to understand and reflects a changing city experimenting with new dynamics within a lab that designs solutions for people with new urban propositions.



**Figure 5** Genoa logo  
(found: <https://bit.ly/2Ygm4wz>)

Since 1989, the Karlstad logo of Sweden has a smiling sun, presenting its sunny position and the joyous mood of the city.



**Figure 6** Karlstad logo  
(found: <https://bit.ly/2O3fdT5>)

Brighton, a city in the southern coast of England, creates the city's name through a palette of colors that reflect the city's characteristics:

- Blue: sea, sky, calm
- Magenta: culture, health, femininity
- Purple: royal, spiritual clarity

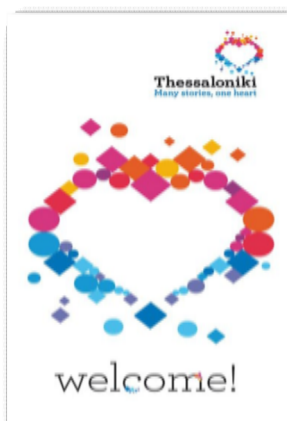
- Black: elegant, timeless.



www.visitbrighton.com

**Figure 7** Brighton logo  
(found: <https://bit.ly/30KfVGw>)

The selected logo of Thessaloniki is a heart made of tattoos with the message "many stories one heart" and features the history, life and spirit of the city ([www.citybranding.gr](http://www.citybranding.gr)).



**Figure 8** Thessaloniki logo  
(found: <https://bit.ly/2Y1DZ5W>)

The city of Trikala has adopted "Smart Trikala" as the city's logo, aiming to highlight the city's forefront of electronic organization issues (e-services aiming at improving the day-to-day life of citizens, simplifying daily transactions, etc.) ([www.citybranding.gr](http://www.citybranding.gr)).



**Figure 9** Trikala logo  
(found: <https://bit.ly/32L0z6j>)

### **Culture at the heart of city branding strategies**

Culture has been used extensively in the marketing of cities as tourist destinations. [Richards and Wilson \(2006\)](#) categorize the strategies that cities have adopted to distinguish themselves in tourism as the following: a) iconic structures, which are the creation of architectural symbols to attract visitors, b) mega events, which constitute the organization of major events, such as the Olympic Games, c) thematization, which constitutes the creation of a central idea as a basis for the city's narrative and d) mining heritage, which constitutes the use of cultural resources of the past for the development of tourism. To the above list can be added the conversion of abandoned industrial areas into cultural and/or entertainment areas, which is now evident in all former industrial cities, as well as the organization of all different types of cultural events and festivals ([Kavaratzis, 2005](#)).

In order for cities to be able to benefit from their cultural offering, to attract and retain creative people in their environment, they must work to build the necessary infrastructure ([Kavaratzis, 2005](#)).

Evans (2001) gives a detailed analysis of what he defines as the “cultural chain of production”. As he explains, in order to translate the definitions of cultural industry activity and production and provide a conceptual framework for arts and cultural planning, as well as the identification of a cultural infrastructure, in culture, a production chain analysis has been applied. This analysis attempts to divide cultural economic activities into five interrelated stages and requires the assessment of a city's ability to sustain and distribute cultural activity and products through its infrastructure. In particular, this cultural production chain is as follows (Evans, 2001):

1. Starting: idea generation, copyright, creativity, education and training. This stage examines a city's capacity as a place for generating ideas, patents, copyrights, brands and its capacity for general creativity. The necessary infrastructure at this stage includes the resources of education and training, research and development.

2. Production: ideas to products and city locations. This stage assesses the ability to transform creativity into production. There are people, resources and manufacturing capabilities that can help turn ideas into marketable products. The assessment records the level and quality of directors, producers, editors, engineers, as well as suppliers and equipment manufacturers in video films, publications, designs aimed at promoting the city. The necessary infrastructure at this stage includes entrepreneurs, the technology to transform creativity into marketable products and the corresponding facilities.

3. Circulation: distribution, wholesale, marketing, information and handling. This stage concerns the quality of agents and agencies, marketing agencies and advertisers, distributors and wholesalers (for example in films or publishing) or middlemen/brokers, packers and assemblers of the product. It also includes assessing the quality of support materials such as catalogues, archives, inventories and other mechanisms that assist in the sale and circulation of cultural products. The necessary infrastructure at this stage includes middlemen, agents, advertisers, publication distributors and transport.

4. Delivery: cultural facilities, television, cinema and shops, which are mechanisms that allow the consumption and enjoyment of cultural products and services. This stage is about the places visitors see, experience and shop. It means evaluating the availability of theatres, cinemas, magazines, museums, record stores and distribution outlets. The growing forms of access and consumption through the internet and e-commerce will supplement and partly replace traditional ways of distributing cultural products, developing their own, more seamless production chain. The necessary infrastructure at this stage includes venues, shops, media channels, magazines, museums and galleries.

5. Public - audiences: watching, listening, viewing. This stage concerns the public and critical environment within which the public comes into contact with works of art and cultural products and includes the assessment of issues such as markets and audiences, as well as pricing and target (social market), targeting issues (including of people, gender and diversity). Tests may include how far a region's cultural activities reach a wide range of social and demographic groups, overseas markets and the creation of a vibrant cultural life. The necessary infrastructures at this stage are marketing, pricing, access, transportation and security.

The creation and management of this chain can help cities create the necessary infrastructure on which to base their efforts to qualify as cultural and/or entertainment centres (Evans, 2001).

## **Definition of cultural heritage and cultural routes**

According to the declaration of [UNESCO \(1972\)](#) cultural heritage means all monuments, architectural works, works of painting and sculpture, and sites that have world historical, aesthetic or ethnological value. "*Cultural heritage is a source of identity and cohesion for communities disrupted by the confusion of change and economic instability*" (<https://whcunesco.org/article-enpdf>). This conceptual approach expresses the importance of cultural heritage for the whole of society and peoples, its multi-level contribution, but also makes evident the necessity of its sustainable management. "*Cultural heritage should be subject to management that will ensure that its value as a whole will be appreciated by future generations. Its preservation depends on the creation in the present of the heritage of the future*" ([www.contenthistorce.nghmd.org](http://www.contenthistorce.nghmd.org)).

Realizing the necessity of the sustainable management of culture and cultural heritage, but also the role it plays in shaping the particular identity of places, the European Union, in collaboration with UNESCO, promoted the institution of cultural routes in 1987 (Programme des interares cultures du conseil de l' Europe). The term 'cultural routes' expresses the effective management of intangible and material cultural heritage, is a trigger for sustainable development in all its components and contributes to the diffusion of its value and knowledge. The term expresses "*cultural tours that contribute to the preservation of memory and cultural comparison*". The Ministry of Culture of Greece, with the aim of highlighting cultural resources, has established "green cultural routes". Initially the program was implemented in 3 prefectures of the country and then expanded to reach in 1987 the participation of 36 Regional Units with different themes.

Cultural routes are divided into urban, local, supra-local, national and international, when they are drawn up with space as the main axis, and thematic when they are organized based on their content. The next distinction concerns their subject matter, which may be dedicated to a local product such as the wine roads or the olive roads, historical, when they refer to cultural goods of one era, and mixed when they are a combination of the characteristics of cultural and natural heritage regardless of the time period ([Papageorgiou & Gadona, 2012](#)).

The relevant guide 'thematic cultural routes' predetermines the objective of the thematic cultural routes, as the means of connecting authentic sites that offer the visitor the possibility to experience the authenticity of the site and discover its culture ([Klaric et al 2013 p.3](#)).

The objectives of the development of the cultural routes are the extension of the tourist season, the attraction of visitors, the opportunities to promote local products, the attraction of new investors, the preservation and safeguarding of the cultural heritage.

The successful achievement of the aforementioned objectives is the one that will maximize the benefits both for society and for the local economy as well as the regional economy, through the increase of GDP and jobs, the awareness of the lifestyle and the promotion of local products and services ([Mitoula, 2023](#)).

For the successful design and completion of a cultural route, certain specifications are set, which must be met in combination with each other, such as good maintenance and access to monuments, attractions, road infrastructure, transport links, alternative paths/routes and the quality service supply network.

In addition to the abovementioned specifications, the successful organization of cultural tours is also based on the development of partnerships. Therefore, the synergy and participation of the stakeholders is required which can be the Local Government Organizations, the entire local community, local entrepreneurs, suppliers of local products, employees, tourist agents, as well as the central services Ministry of Tourism, Ministry of Culture (archaeological sites), YPEKA (protected areas) etc.

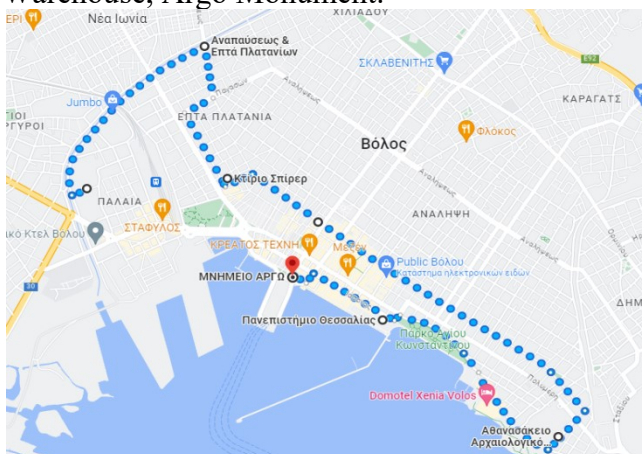
Cultural routes are the most important tool for the development of cultural tourism as an alternative form of tourism. "Cultural tourism is traveling motivated by the search for experiences and activities related to culture, knowledge of the history and tradition of places, getting to know customs and manners" (Oikonomou, Karagiannis, 2022). It is to this common goal that cultural routes are addressed, as the cultural tourist has a higher income and a higher level of education since his trips aim not only at the discovery of monuments but also at the diffusion of culture and its preservation ([www.icomos.org](http://www.icomos.org)). The cultural tourist is interested in archaeological sites, monuments, local customs and traditions, areas of natural beauty, cultural events, performances, festivals, arts, etc. (Mitoula, 2014).

### Suggestions for cultural routes

Many studies have been carried out by the Department of Economy and Sustainable Development, which suggest the promotion of city brands through cultural routes. Below are some examples of suggested cultural routes in Greek and foreign cities:

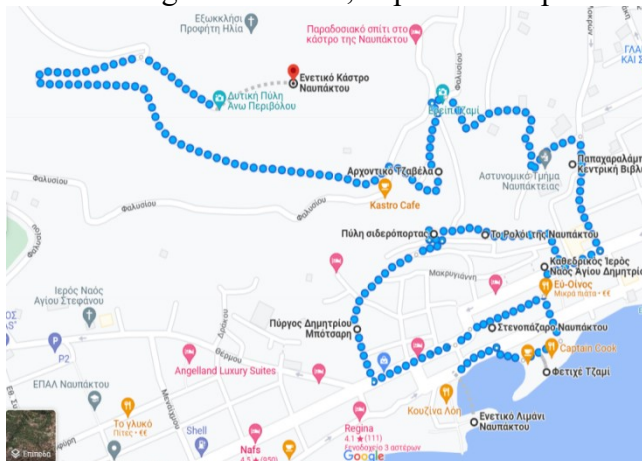
- **Volos** (Region of Thessaly). Cultural route 6.8 km, duration 80 minutes.

Stops: Brick Ceramics Museum, Mourtzoukou Textile Factory "Leviathan", Spierer Building, Matsaggou Tobacco Factory, Athanasakeion Archaeological Museum, Papantou Tobacco Warehouse, Argo Monument.



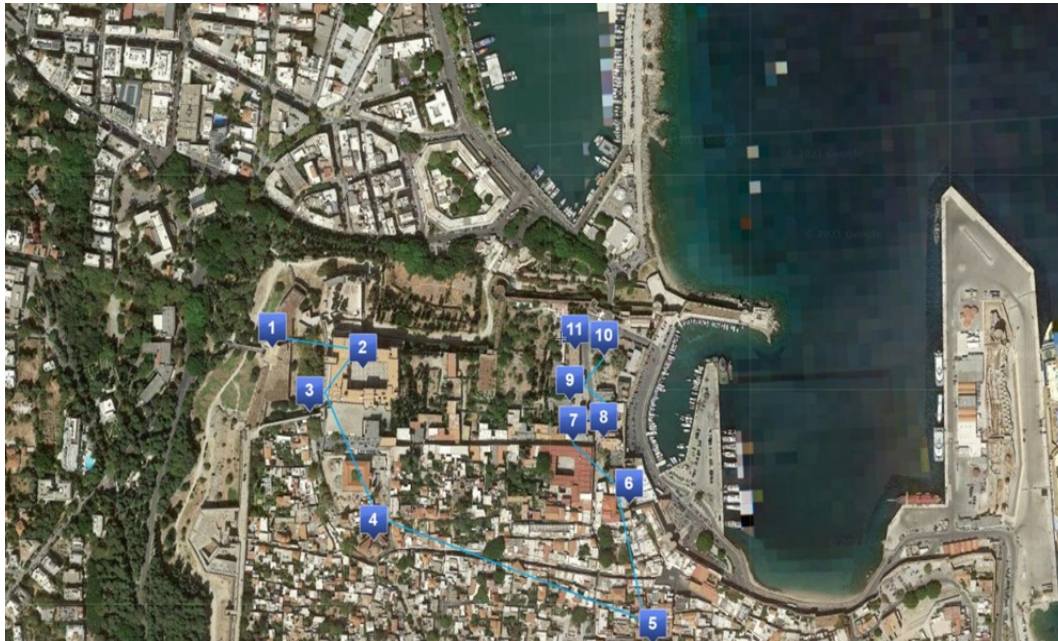
- **Nafpaktos** (Western Greece Region). Cultural route 2.7 km, duration 2 hours.

Stops: Nafpaktos Port, Michael Cervantes Statue, Georgios Anemoyiannis Statue, Fethihe Mosque, Nafpaktos Narrow Bazaar, Botsari Tower, Iron Gate, Nafpaktos Clock, Metropolitan Church of Agios Dimitrios, Papacharalampios Library, Tzavella Mansion, Nafpaktos Castle



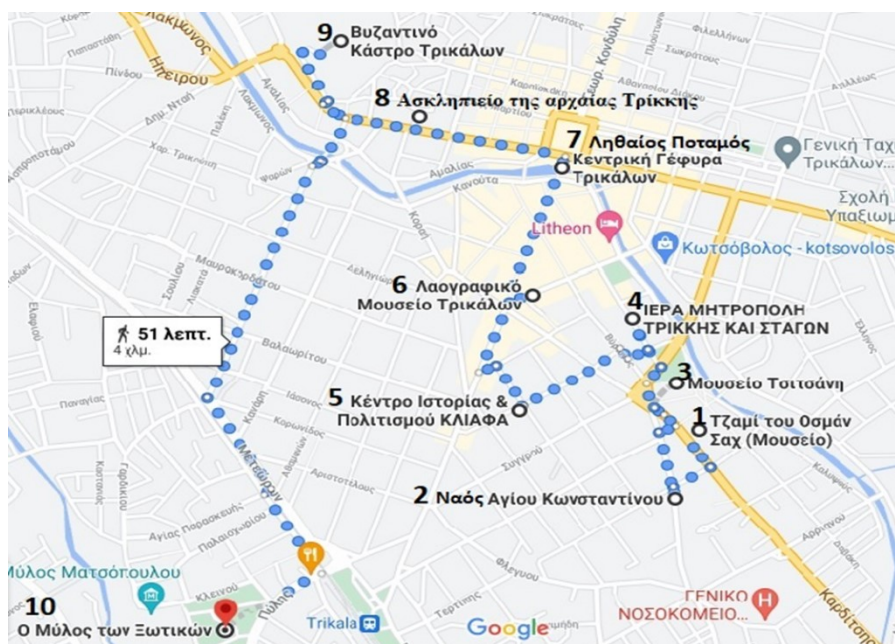
- **Rhodes** (South Aegean Region). Cultural route 3 km, duration 3 hours.

Stops: Gate D'Amboisse, Palace of the Grand Masters of the Knights of Rhodes, Gate of Saint Anthony, Mosque of Suleiman, Mosque of Ibrahim Pasha, Archaeological Museum, Street of the Knights, The Lady of the Castle, Armory of the Knights - the Folk Art Museum, Temple of Aphrodite, Municipal Art Gallery.



- **Trikala** (Region of Thessaly). Cultural route 2.5 km, duration 3 hours.

Stops: Hammam of Osman Shah and Kursum Mosque, Church of Saint Constantine, Tsitsani Museum, Museum of the Holy Metropolis, Klifa Society History and Culture Centre, Municipal Folklore Museum, Litheos river, Asklepion of Ancient Trikki, Byzantine Castle of the city, Mill of the Elves



**- Lemessos (Cyprus)**

Stops: 1. Starting point-Church of Agios Antonios, 2. Lanitis carob mills, 3. Medieval castle and medieval museum of Lemessos, 4. Great Mosque, 5. Cathedral of Agia Napa, 6. First Municipal Market, 7. Lemessos City Hall, 8. Heroes' Square, 9. Folklore Museum, 10. Municipal University Library, 11. Catholic Church of Saint Catherine, 12. Embankment and Sculpture Park, 13. Final-Old Port.



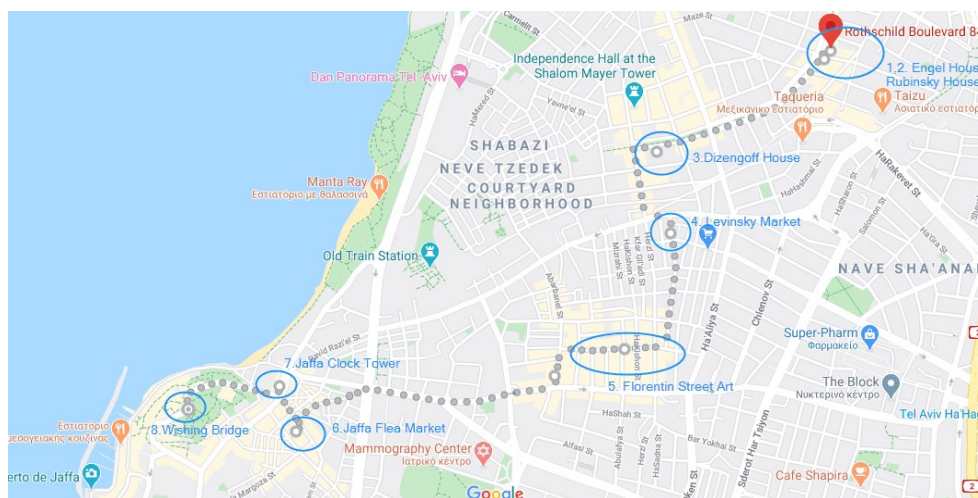
**- Poitiers (France)**

Manneken Pis' Twin, Cure de Saint Porchaire, Hotel de Ville, Hôtel Jean Beaucé, Palais de Justice de Poitiers, Church of Notre-Dame la Grande, Poitiers Cathedral



- **Tel Aviv** (Israel) Cultural Route 3.9 km, duration 4 hours.

Stops: 1. Engel House, 2. Rubinsky House, 3. Independence Building, 4. Levinsky Market, 5. Florentine (Street Art), 6. Jaffa Open Air Market, 7. Jaffa Clock Tower, 8. Bridge of Desires



## Conclusions

From the previous text it follows that the elements of the natural environment and the components of the cultural heritage are important factors in attracting visitors and entrepreneurship to a place. In the context of city branding, culture has become a key resource from which to derive the central ideas and narrative necessary to revive a place. Central ideas and this narrative are often seen as connecting a place's natural assets and living culture. For example, many declining cities have had to create new regeneration narratives, based on urban culture and heritage, in their attempt to make a transition towards an economy of signs and symbols (Richards and Wilson, 2006). In this context, the creation and establishment of cultural routes in the cities, contributes to the promotion of their culture. Through an organized framework, it is possible to visit the basic cultural elements and highlight the special elements of the city's culture, which differentiate it from all the others. Cultural routes today are a tool used by many cities in their efforts to promote their particular city branding.

At the same time, city branding is a phenomenon like corporate branding, which aims to promote an urban entity. The goal of city branding is to differentiate a specific city from others and make it attractive, creating a positive image.

City brands are in many ways similar to corporate brands. However, due to its nature, it is more complex and the target audience is much wider than in the case of a single product, as the "products" available on the market include many and more complex factors. The factor of credibility cultivated in the case of a strong brand seems to be the decisive argument for most prospective customers. Cities, like companies, can benefit from a strong brand if their image leads to customer loyalty. For the city, this means an increase in revenue and an easier acquisition of new business partners, "investors" and "customers". In short, branding can be used as a tool to build not only competitive but also responsible and sustainable cities (Mitoula, Kaldis, 2018).

A city's brand gives it a representative image in the world, allowing it to enjoy competitive advantages both regionally and internationally. A city's brand is very important as it influences people's decisions to visit, relocate or invest in it. Therefore, the cultivation of city branding can significantly affect the well-being and quality of life of local citizens.

From the examples of the cities mentioned above, it is clear that today, many cities worldwide are trying to develop an effective brand. Famous and successful cities are usually associated with tourist destinations, entertainment events, cultural festivals and investment promotion (Mitoula, Kaldis, 2019).

Through these examples, the crucial role of utilizing and highlighting the special cultural heritage of each city was shown. The need for the preservation and dissemination of the cultural heritage to ensure the sustainability of the city was therefore underlined. In this effort, the establishment of cultural routes as a contributing factor and magnet for the group of alternative tourists called cultural tourists is considered important.

## References

- Papageorgiou M., Gadona E. (2012) "Cultural tourism and cultural routes" Volos, University Publications of Thessaly.
- Klaric V., Andoic M., Nevidal R., Horjan G. (2013) "Managing visitors on thematic cultural routes Handbook", Ministry of tourism of the republic of Croatia.
- Mitoula R., Kaldis P. (2019) "City Branding and Cultural Routes", Sustainable Development, Culture, Traditions Journal, Special Issue, 118–131. <https://doi.org/10.26341/issn.2241-4002-2019-sv-12>
- Mitoula R., Kaldis P. (2018) "City Branding and Sustainable Development. The Case of Cultural Routes", Parazisi Publications, Athens, Greece, ISBN 960-02-3438-1.
- Roido Mitoula (2023a) "City Branding and Cultural Routes. Case Studies from Greece and Abroad", International Conference on "Digital Technologies, Common European Cultural Heritage, and Sustainable Development", European Union, Erasmus+ Programme, Interdisciplinary Resilience through Science and Cultural Heritage Network, Corfu, 21-22 March 2023
- Mitoula R. (2023b) "Sustainable Economic Regional Development", Kallipos publications
- Ekonomou Ag., Karagiannis St. (2022) "Circular Tourism and Sustainability", Broken Hill publications
- Alexa E. (2012) "Using Culture in Defining City Brands", International Place Branding Conference, pp.1-10.
- Ashworth G., Kavaratzis M. (2007) "Beyond the logo: Brand management for cities", Journal of Brand Management, 16(8), pp.520-531.
- Biçakçi A. (2012) "Branding the city through culture: Istanbul, European Capital of Culture, 2010, International Journal of Human Sciences, 9(1), pp.993-1006.
- Cai L. (2002) "Cooperative branding for rural destinations", Annals of Tourism Research, 29(3), pp.720-742.
- Dinnie K. (2010) "City Branding. Theory and Cases", Palgrave Macmillan.
- Evans G. (2001) "Cultural planning, an urban renaissance?" Routledge.
- Freire J. (2009) "Local people" a critical dimension for place brands", Brand Management, 16(7), pp.420-438.
- García J., Gómez M., Molina, A. (2012), "A destination-branding model: An empirical analysis based on stakeholders", Tourism Management, 33(3), pp.646-661.
- Griffiths R. (2006) "City/culture discourses: Evidence from the competition to select the European capital of culture 2008", European Planning Studies, 14(4), pp.415-430.
- Hall D. (1999) "Destination branding, niche marketing and national image projection in Central and Eastern Europe" Journal of Vacation Marketing, 5(3), pp.227-237.
- Hanna S., Rowley J. (2008) "An analysis of terminology use in place branding", Place Branding and Public Diplomacy, 4(1), pp.61-75.

- Julier G. (2005) "Urban Designscapes and the Production of Aesthetic Consent", *Urban Studies*, 42(5-6), pp.869-887.
- Kavaratzis M., Ashworth G. (2006) "City branding: An effective assertion of identity or a transitory marketing trick?", *Place Branding*, 2(3), pp.183-194.
- Kavaratzis M. (2011) "The Dishonest Relationship Between City Marketing and Culture: Reflections on the theory and the case of Budapest", *Journal of Town and City Management*, 1(4), pp.334-345.
- Kavaratzis M. (2005) "Branding the City through Culture and Entertainment", *Journal Aesop*, 5, pp.1-7.
- Kunzmann K. (2004) "Culture, creativity and spatial planning", *Town Planning Review*, 75(4), pp.383-404.
- Lim H. (2016) "The Contribution of Festivals to City Branding", PhD Thesis. University of Westminster.
- Middleton C. (2011) "City Branding and Inward Investment", in K. Dinnie, ed., *City Branding. Theory and Cases*. pp. 15-26.
- Nickerson N., Moisey R. (1999) "Branding a state from features to positioning: Making it simple?", *Journal of Vacation Marketing*, 5(3), pp.217-226.
- Oh S. (2010) "Nothing is impossible in Seoul", 21centurybooks.
- O'Leary R., Iredale I. (1976) "The marketing concept: quo vadis?", *European Journal of Marketing*, 10(3), pp.146-157.
- Popoli P. (2017) "Advancing Insights on Brand Management", IntechOpen.
- Rainisto S. (2003) "Success factors of place marketing: A study of place marketing practices in Northern Europe and the United States", PhD thesis. Helsinki University of Technology.
- Richards G., Wilson J. (2006) "Developing creativity in tourist experiences: A solution to the serial reproduction of culture?", *Tourism Management*, 27(6), pp.1209-1223.
- Scott A. (2001) "The Cultural Economy of Cities. Essays on the Geography of Image-Producing Industries", SAGE.
- Zhuanqing C. (2010) "The Strategic Research on Zhongyuan Culture and City Brand Marketing", in: 2010 Conference on International Marketing Science and Management Technology, pp.1-11.

<https://whcUnesco.org/article-enpdf>

[www.contenthistorce.nghmd.org](http://www.contenthistorce.nghmd.org)

<https://bit.ly/2YdctXj>)

[www.visit groningen.nl](http://www.visit groningen.nl)

<https://bit.ly/2Y3Rouc>

<https://bit.ly/30MoZut>)

<https://bit.ly/2Z2CsOr>

<https://bit.ly/2Ygm4wz>

<https://bit.ly/2O3fdT5>

<https://bit.ly/30KfVGw>

<https://bit.ly/2Y1DZ5W>

<https://bit.ly/32L0z6j>