

HERIWELL

Cultural Heritage as a Source
of Societal Well-being in European Regions



In collaboration with

ISTITUTO
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ESPON HERIWELL FINAL CONFERENCE

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A snapshot of the HERIWELL project and its main findings

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The HERIWELL Project

What

- The project aims to **develop a pan-European methodology and a territorial analysis of the contribution of cultural heritage** to societal well-being. It also considers the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on delivering and accessing CH resources.

Who

- Launched by the Espon EGTC.
- Carried out by a partnership (led by) Istituto per la Ricerca Sociale (IRS), Acume, European Association of Cultural Researchers (ERICarts Network and Institute) and the Associazione per l'Economia della Cultura (AEC)\

How: HERIWELL research activities



How to define cultural heritage?

- FARO Convention (2005): **‘Cultural capital’ inherited from the past**, which people consider as an expression of their evolving values, beliefs, knowledge and traditions and from which, through investment and effort, originates the rich and varied cultures of modern Europe.
- Produced by the interaction over time between people and places: **community based and changing over time.**
- **Intrinsic value** but also **investment** from which future development – cultural, social and economic – may be generated.
- Three interconnected forms of cultural heritage: **tangible, intangible and combined/mixed forms of cultural heritage.**
- Specific attention to **controversial and neglected heritage.**

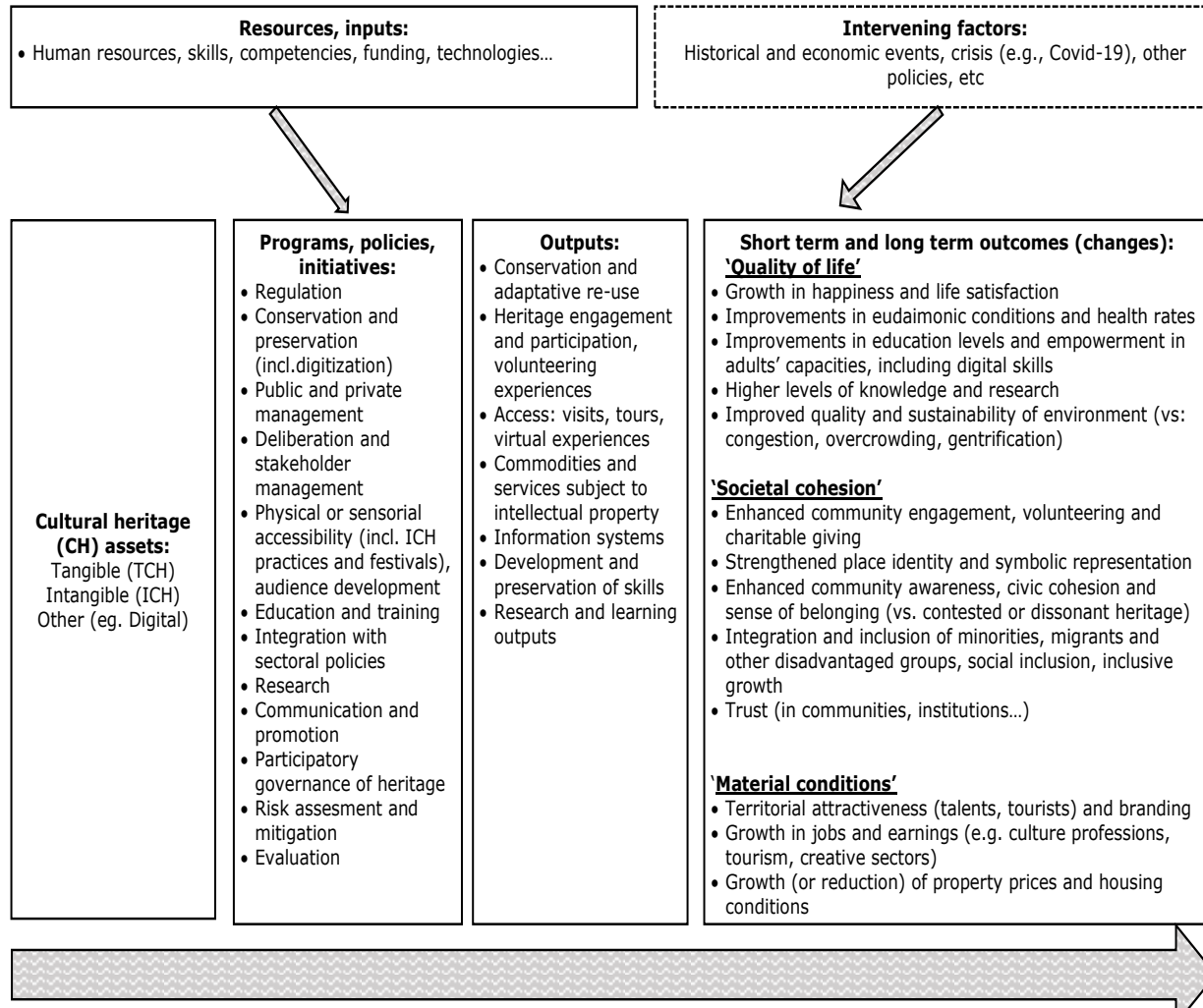
How to define social well-being?

- Well-being encompasses both **individual and societal well-being**.
- **Individual well-being**: shaped by societal perceptions and practices; connected to social norms and values.
- **Societal well-being**: collective well-being of the community, including also individual well-being.
- **Three forms of intertwined societal well-being dimensions** considered in the analysis:
 - **Quality of life**: education and skills, including digital ones and digitisation; knowledge and research; health; happiness and life satisfaction; contentment and eudaimonia; quality and sustainability of the environment.
 - **Societal cohesion**: community engagement, volunteering and charitable giving; cultural diversity; equal opportunities and empowerment; human rights and freedom of expression; place identity and sense of belonging; integration and inclusion of disadvantaged social groups; trust; reconciliation of relations.
 - **Material conditions**: territorial attractiveness and branding; property prices and housing; jobs and earnings.

Two main challenges to assessing the contribution of cultural heritage to societal well-being

1. *How to **develop operational definitions of cultural heritage and societal well-being** that are measurable with available data and comparable across countries and over time.*
2. *How to **define and measure the relationship** structures between heritage and the heterogeneity and complexity of impacts on the different dimensions of societal well-being, which cannot be measured by resorting to a single and undifferentiated method of analysis:*
 - The relation between heritage and well-being is strongly influenced by many **intervening variables** and by the need to account for the **heterogeneity of impacts** on the different social groups composing a community.
 - **Interconnected nature of the societal well-being dimensions** and limited data on dimensions other than the material conditions of individuals and communities.

How to deal with these challenges?/1



Theory of change approach to set into relation heritage and societal well-being:

- Clarifying the hypotheses that link the different variables pertaining to cultural heritage and societal well-being:
 - ✓ Cultural heritage influences well-being through specific valorisation strategies;
 - ✓ accessibility of cultural heritage is propaedeutic to participation in it;
 - ✓ cultural heritage impacts transversally and on all dimensions of well-being and these impacts are intertwined;
 - ✓ intervening factors can condition the impact of cultural heritage on well-being.
- Providing evidence to verify these hypotheses.
- Providing explanations on why some relevant outcomes derive from specific policy configurations.

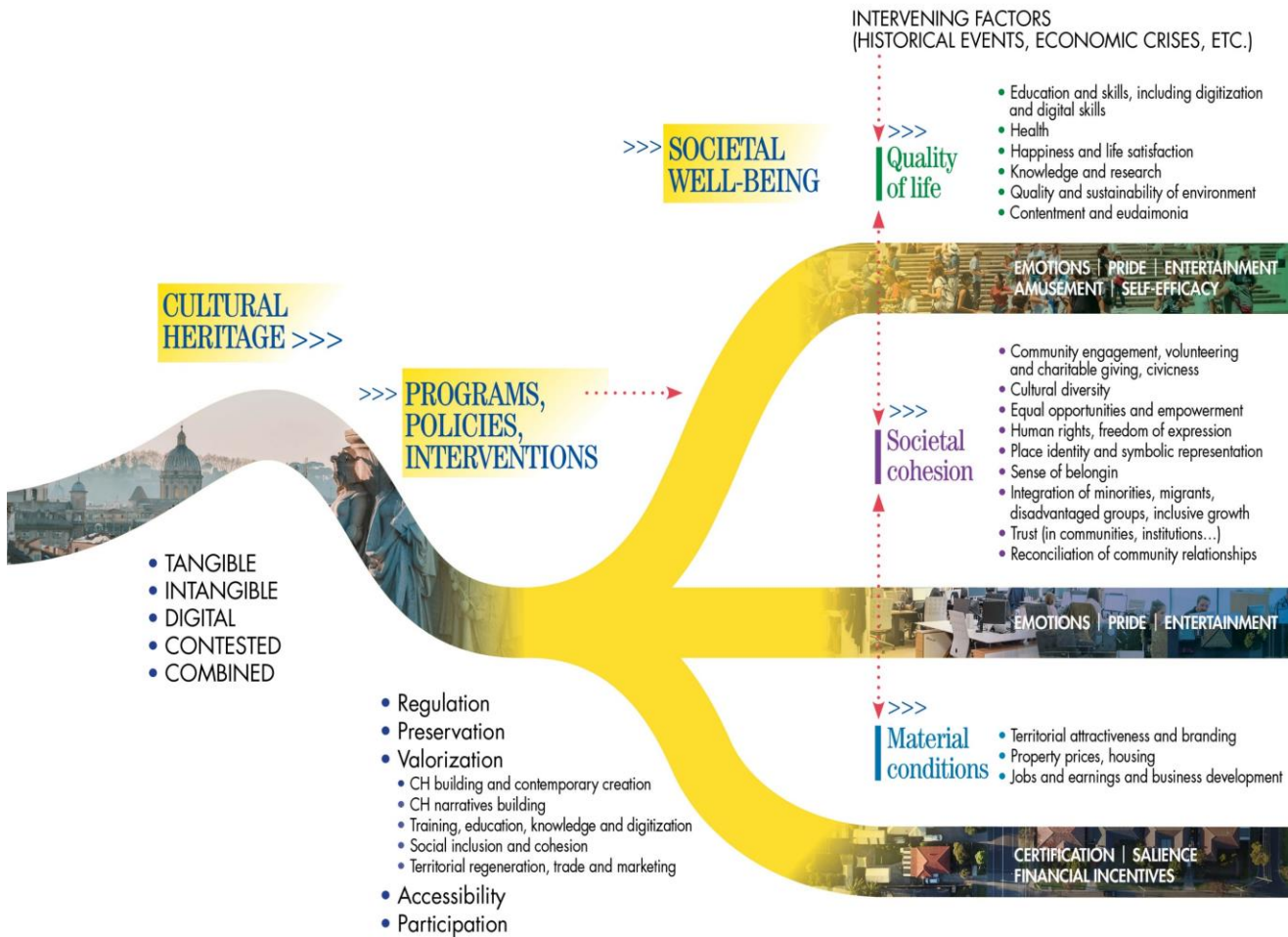
How to deal with these challenges?/2



Multi-method
design

- **Pan-European (macro level) analysis** of the linkages between cultural heritage and societal well-being at national and regional level, including:
 - ✓ econometric analysis based on official data sources and big data;
 - ✓ descriptive analysis of administrative data on: the gender balance in the direction of state funded museums; UNESCO list of Intangible Cultural Heritage;
 - ✓ quali-quantitative analyses of primary data: population survey in 8 ESPON countries (BE, CZ, DE, ES, IE, IT, NO, PL: 8,818 respondents overall); stakeholders survey on contested/neglected heritage.
- **Local (micro level) analysis of 8 extrapolative case studies** in the survey countries to analyse the mechanisms linking heritage and well-being at local level.
- **Assessment of EU investments in cultural heritage in the programming period 2014-2020**, including:
 - ✓ quantitative mapping of cultural heritage related investments in European Structural Funds and Creative Europe programmes at NUTS1 and (where possible) NUTS2 levels;
 - ✓ qualitative meta-analysis of the ex-post evaluations of the ECoC capitals with heritage investments (desk analysis and stakeholders' interviews).

Main findings: societal well-being effects of cultural heritage/1



- **Heritage contributes positively and transversally to well-being.**
- **Contribution of heritage is significant on:** education and skills, including digital skills; place identity and sense of belonging; reconciliation of community relationships; jobs, earnings and business development.
- **Bi-directional relation** between participation in heritage and well-being.
- However, cultural heritage has also **negative impacts on well-being.**
- **Different typologies of cultural heritage** contribute to well-being in a **strongly interconnected way** and **effects of heritage on well-being are mutually-dependent.**

Main findings: societal well-being effects of cultural heritage/2

- **Effects of cultural heritage on societal well-being depend on its valorisation:**
 - **Heritage endowments need to be accessible and accessed/participated** by people in order to produce societal well-being effects.
 - **Participation in cultural heritage** depends on: accessibility and affordability; sense of ownership and identification with heritage; recognition of the value of heritage for well-being.
 - **Narratives of cultural heritage** shape **recognition and identification** with cultural heritage.
- **Effects of cultural heritage are context dependent:**
 - **The societal recognition of cultural heritage changes over time and across societies.**
 - **Cultural heritage has a greater impact on well being in countries and regions with good economic and social conditions**, e.g. education is the most important personal characteristics explaining differences in engagement with heritage, and hence its ability to trigger societal well-being (as shown by the HERIWELL survey to population).

// Thank you for your attention

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