

Una manera de hacer Europa



BUENAS PRÁCTICAS Actuaciones Cofinanciadas

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Programa Operativo de Cataluña

Año 2020

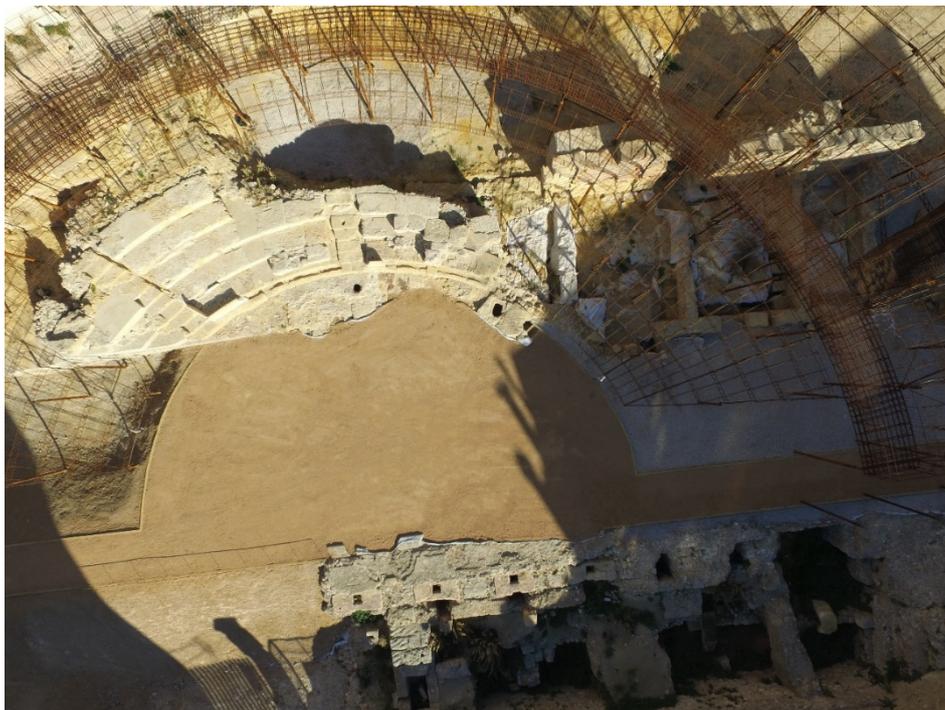
Fondo Europeo de Desarrollo Regional

The project “National Archaeology Museum of Tarragona (MNAT) - Roman Theatre” is being submitted as a Good Practice

The operation consists in valorising the archaeological remains of the Roman Theatre of Tarragona and opening it to the public; this theatre was built during the era of emperor Augustus and is currently one of the spaces within the National Archaeology Museum of Tarragona managed by the Catalan Cultural Heritage Agency. The works are integrated into the Department of Culture's measures to valorise and guarantee the sustainability of the Tarraco World Heritage Site and are encompassed within the *Museum Plan of Catalonia* as a selection framework.

The goal of the project is to understand the importance of the theatre within the urban setting, in accordance with four lines of action: research and archaeological excavation; conservation and restoration work; museumisation to make the space understandable to visitors; and the monument's fit within the urban setting and improved accessibility.

The project entails the museumisation of the monument, a facility to welcome visitors and the integration of the adjacent space to turn it into a strategic archaeology park in the Roman Cultural Route in Tarragona.



Project costs a total of €1,007,756, €832,856 of which can be subsidised, with an ERDF grant of €416,428. Since the site was opened to the public via guided tours, the number of visitors to the project rose by 2,865 as of December 2019.

This operation is being submitted as a Good Practice because it meets the following criteria:

1. High level of dissemination among the beneficiaries, potential beneficiaries and public at large

The operation was duly disseminated via the following actions:

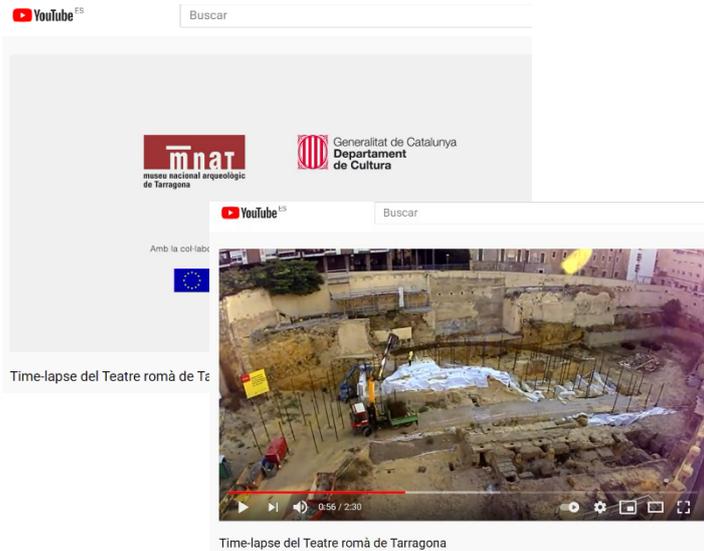
Temporary placard while the project was being executed.



Presence on the website of the Department of Culture of the Government of Catalonia

Beneficiari	Departament de Cultura - Agència Catalana del Patrimoni Cultural
Priority d'inversió	6.3. La conservació, la protecció, el foment i el desenvolupament del patrimoni natural i cultural
Despesa total de l'operació	1.007.755,96 €
Despesa elegible	832.856,17 €
Ajuda FIDRR	416.426,08 €
Termini d'execució	2019-2019

Publication of a time-lapse video of the first phase in the museumisation of the Roman Theatre of Tarragona.



Informative brochures on the Theatre in different languages: Catalan (5,000 units), Spanish (3,500 units), English (2,500 units) and French (2,500 units).

THE MUSEUM COLLECTION

The MNAT has an extraordinary collection of pieces from the excavations of the theatre. They correspond to the statues of gods and members of the imperial household in civilian (toga) or military (cuirass) attire. Examples include a togated Augustus (A), which preserves some of the pigment originally used to decorate the statues, and a cuirassed figure, perhaps of a Flavian-dynasty emperor, barefooted in the way gods and emperors were depicted (B).

The find of a Venus (C) and an altar dedicated to the numen (divine power) of Augustus (D) testify to the role of theatrical plays as an expression of the town's civic and religious life.

Also preserved are the majestic remains of the theatre's stage, including inscriptions, cornices, columns and capitals (E). They would also have been stuccoed and painted, giving them a very different appearance to the one we see today.

GOING TO THE THEATRE

The masks (F) excavated are evidence of the performances (ludi scaenici), dances and plays that accompanied the main religious ceremonies, which began in the forum. Every year the new appointees to municipal posts –duumvirs and aediles– were obliged to finance this type of spectacle, which could be complemented or replaced by gladiator fights in the amphitheatre or chariot races in the circus.

On the western side of the theatre there was an extensive area of gardens with a fountain or nymphaeum, the water from which flowed into a large pond in a richly decorated area. Farther to the west there was a public baths complex, known today as the Sant Miquel baths.

ENGLISH

T A R R A G O

ROMAN THEATRE

2. Incorporation of innovative elements

The intervention project in the Roman Theatre site in Tarragona required an extraordinarily complex action due to its location and size within the city's grid of streets. In this sense, it had to be an extremely meticulously planned project compatible with the archaeological remains: it included a re-creation of the theatre's cavea, made with linear iron structures. This action evokes the stands that used to exist in the Roman period via a dialogue with the conserved remains, while also helping visitors grasp the size of the monument and restoring the original geometry.

The value of this intervention was appreciated and awarded by the 11th Alejandro de la Sota Biennial-Architecture Fair of Tarragona in the Outdoor Spaces section. Likewise, the architectural project was one of the finalists in the prestigious 2019 FAD awards for Architecture and Interior Design in the City and Landscape category, stressing its clearly innovative nature.



3. Adaptation of the results of the operation to the original objectives

The improvement project of the conservation and arrangement of the Roman Theatre of Tarragona seeks to foster the protection, promotion and development of the cultural heritage.

The Roman Theatre is part of the rich web of cultural infrastructures in the city of Tarragona and one of the fourteen Roman monuments in the Tarragonés region to be declared a UNESCO Human Heritage Site in 2000. Executing this project was necessary to significantly improve visits to the archaeology complex and to turn it into a world-class museographic resource. It is one of the spaces that needed updates to improve its access, conservation and presentation to the public. The project reflects the global view of improvement of our cultural heritage focused not only on movable property but also expanded to archaeological spaces and the properties where they are located.

4. Contribution to solving a regional problem or weakness

This project is part of the framework partnership agreement between the Department of Culture and the Tarragona Town Hall (December 2015) to promote the Tàrraco World Heritage Site in order to consolidate it nationally and internationally as a world-class cultural, educational and tourist product.

One of the objectives of the agreement is to make Tarragona a benchmark city in the protection, conservation and dissemination of the cultural heritage, which improves its citizens' quality of life and captivates its visitors, while also seeking to turn Tarragona into a solid, high-quality tourist destination based on cultural heritage as an economic engine and pursuing sustainable development. The arrangement of the Roman Theatre can help spur the other museum and heritage sites in the National Archaeology Museum of Tarragona complex and generate territorial development dynamics not only for the city of Tarragona but also for its entire region.

5. Degree of coverage over the population to which it is targeted

The fact that the space was only recently opened to the public means, in terms of direct impact, that the number of visitors is still modest, with a total of 2,066. However, there are still other complementary actions to be undertaken, including plans for the archaeological excavation of the *hyposcaenium* (currently underway), the inclusion of a visitor welcome area (in the prior study stage) and the integration of the adjacent spaces (in the prior study stage), which will unquestionably improve these figures. At the same time, it seeks to be a launching pad for a Roman Cultural Route due to its strategic location within the contemporary route system, an undertaking that shall be developed at a later date. In any event, this valorisation and museumisation project already enables us to guarantee the long-term sustainability of the archaeology site, one of the most important monuments from the Roman period in Catalonia. Consequently, this assures that all Catalan people will be able to visit it in the forthcoming years, especially the educational community.



6. Fulfilment of the horizontal principles (sustainable development, equality between men and women and non-discrimination principle) and the environmental regulations.

With regard to the obligations to promote equality between men and women and the non-discrimination principle, both the Department of Culture (beneficiary) and the Catalan Cultural Heritage Agency (executor) adopt protocols to prevent, detect, act on and resolve situations of sexual harassment by reason of sex, sexual orientation and/or sexual identity, as well as situations of workplace psychological harassment and other kinds of discrimination in the workplaces of the administration of the Government of Catalonia, as stipulated by the Directorate General of Public Administration of the Government of Catalonia. It also accordingly sets aside jobs for individuals with disabilities and applies the Equal Opportunity Plan between women and men of the Administration of the Government of Catalonia.

With regard to the environmental regulations, application of the statement of environmental impact was not needed for this project, and therefore it followed the requirements of the European Union and the environmental laws in force. The project was undertaken respecting the different community, state and regional regulations on environmental sustainability policies, bearing in mind compliance with and respect for the horizontal principles of sustainable development and fostering the protection and improving the quality of the environment.

7. Synergies with other public intervention policies or instruments

First, as mentioned above, there is a partnership agreement with the Tarragona Town Hall to promote the Tàrraco World Heritage Site.

Furthermore, the operation is part of the museum's Investment Programme on Museographic and Infrastructure Renovation contained in the Museum Plan of Catalonia. It encompasses not only the Roman Theatre projects but also actions at the central site of the National Archaeology Museum of Tarragona, where investments have been made since 2018 to refurbish and modernise the museum facilities with the participation of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport of the General State Administration, which owns the facility.

The operation was additionally funded by the Ministry of Development for the action “Phase I of construction on the Roman Theatre of Tàrraco”, within the assistance for actions to conserve and/or enrich the Spanish Historical Heritage.



Thus, the involvement of all three administrations, state, regional and local, along with the participation of the European Union via ERDF funds, will foster the deseasonalisation of tourism in a region that is heavily dependent upon summer tourism.

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