

## **Best practice 16: Protection and rehabilitation of the archaeological ensemble of Tarragona, Spain**

**Scale:** Urban

**Stage of tourism development:** Growing

**Main objective:** Improve urban quality of life

Categories of effects:

### **Effects on urban governance**

- Integrated urban planning
- Destination management
- Stakeholder participation

### **Effects on quality of life**

- Built heritage diversity
- Urban economies
- Social life, local values and traditions

In the early 90's the municipality of Tarragona decided to bet on a kind of tourism different from the "sun and beach" typology. Conscious of the richness of their built heritage and convinced that this constituted a specific and unique feature of Tarragona among other cities of the area, the municipality decided to invest in a cultural tourism offer project. They started in 1993 the procedures to include its archaeological ensemble to the UNESCO's World Heritage List. In the plans of the municipality this recognition would bring two main advantages: the first would be the preservation of the sites and its surrounding area, consequence of the strict rules imposed by the World Heritage List. These rules don't focus just on the site itself, but also on its surrounding area, in terms of visual impact and environmental impact. This would ensure the preservation of the area and its transmission to future reservations, above local private interests and changing policies of changing governments. The second advantage, in the medium and long term, would be the exploitation of the sites as a resource, in terms of development of cultural tourism, as well as the related benefits, both economic and cultural, that this would bring to the residents. The procedure took 7 years, and in 2000 the archaeological ensemble of Tarragona was finally included in the list. From this moment on, the municipality has been able to justify important public investments for the restoration and opening of the monuments. Between 2000 and 2004 the investments increased every year something between 20% and 30% than the previous year. The money came almost exclusively from the municipality budget, but some contributions were also made by the Regional Administration, and from the Ministry of Fomento (ministry of development). After the restoration and enhancement works, some of the sites have been opened with the intention of finding them new or past uses in the life of the community: this includes their use for theatre representations, concerts, presentation of books, historic reenactments etc.

**Source:** V Jornada sobre Gestión del Patrimonio Sostenible: el Patrimonio como elemento dinamizador del territorio, organised by Fundación Abertis, in Teatro Real, Madrid, November 18, 2005.

**Link:**

<http://www.tinet.org/~ajtargna/patrimoni/patrimoni.html>