



PRESS RELEASE

iHERITAGE EU-funded project selected to represent the Sicilian Region at Expo Dubai 2020

iHERITAGE international cooperation project, has been selected by the Department of Tourism of Sicilian Region as the most innovative project for the enhancement of cultural heritage, as part of the thematic week “Travel&Connectivity Week” of **EXPO Dubai 2020**.

On January 10th, 2021, at 11.00 (local time) iHERITAGE was presented in the Italian Pavilion, with a focus on the new immersive technologies adopted by the project (augmented reality, virtual reality and mixed reality) that will allow visitors to experience the tangible and intangible UNESCO cultural heritage of the Mediterranean countries (Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Spain, Portugal, Italy) in an innovative way.

The conference was attended by the Regional Assessor of Tourism, Manlio Messina, the project managers for the Sicilian Region, Rosalia Giambrone and Daniele Licciardello, the creator of the project and executive director of the Network of Castles and Medieval Towns, Lucio Tambuzzo, and the project coordinator for the University of Palermo - Department of Architecture, Professor Rossella Corrao.

The immersive installation

Inside the EXPO 2020 Italian Pavilion, the Sicilian Region - Department of Tourism set up an immersive installation for tourism promotion and marketing curated by Laura Galvano, with the artistic video by Dario Andriolo, presenting Sicily in a new and highly engaging way by offering the opportunity to experience the territory in an environment immersed in the inebriating scent of citrus, where the visitor walks on a floor covered with mirrors.

Videos produced by the University of Palermo for iHERITAGE and by the Diocese of Monreale, with photos by Francesco Ferla, were also projected in the immersive room. The mosaics of the Villa romana del Casale in Piazza Armerina, those of the Palatine Chapel of the Royal Palace of Palermo, of the cathedrals of Monreale and Cefalù, the



qanat of Palermo and the finds of the archaeological park of Neapolis in Syracuse and of the archaeological area of Morgantina in Enna magically take shape in the Accademia hall of the Italian Pavilion. On the occasion of Expo 2020 Dubai, the immersive installation was set up in an evocative space where visitors can walk on a floor covered with mirrors and immersed in the inebriating scent of citrus, curated by architect Laura Galvano. Inside the immersive room, videos made by the University of Palermo with photos by Francesco Ferla, who also handled their creation.

“Bringing the iHERITAGE project to Dubai - said Manlio Messina, Regional Assessor of Tourism - is a source of pride and also a demonstration of how collaboration and cooperation can certainly produce highly efficient projects. In a difficult time linked to the pandemic emergency, talking about new technologies and planning is the best way to develop and give new responses to a dramatically affected sector such as tourism”.

“A global stage to promote Sicilian UNESCO sites around the world - says Lucio Tambuzzo, creator of iHERITAGE - which will be accessible in a totally innovative and immersive way. Not only technological innovation, but also cross-border co-creation processes, training courses, industry-academia collaboration, funding for start-ups and spin-offs throughout the Mediterranean basin, the creation of the first Register of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Mediterranean countries, the network of UNESCO sites in the Mediterranean and a Regional Centre for the safeguard and promotion of the Mediterranean intangible heritage”.

iHERITAGE: ICT Mediterranean platform for UNESCO cultural heritage is a strategic project 90% co-financed by the ENI CBC Mediterranean Sea Basin Programme of the European Union. The total budget of the project is € 3.874.287,06. The project will last 30 months (started on September 15th, 2020). *iHERITAGE* involves 10 partners from 6 Mediterranean countries: Egypt, Italy, Jordan, Lebanon, Portugal and Spain.

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