



**REPUBLIC OF ALBANIA
MINISTRY OF ECONOMY, CULTURE AND INNOVATION**

**STATE PARTY REPORT
ON THE STATE OF CONSERVATION OF**

**HISTORIC CENTRES OF BERAT AND GJIROKASTRA
WORLD HERITAGE
ALBANIA**

Ref 569bis

January 2025

Historic Centers of Berat and Gjirokastra (Albania) (569bis)
Report on the State of Conservation 2025
By the State Party of Albania

1. Executive Summary

The year 2024 marked the resumption of efforts to develop an Integrated Management Plan (IMP) for the historic centers of Berat and Gjirokastra, an important step toward ensuring the long-term preservation and sustainable management of this World Heritage property. The updated Terms of Reference (ToR) for the IMP reflect a holistic and forward-looking approach, building upon earlier IMP drafts, ICCROM and ICOMOS recommendations, and a thorough analysis of ‘new’ challenges, including rising tourism pressures, demographic shifts, and administrative changes. Designed to address the complex interplay between tourism, urban development, and local communities, the IMP aims to strike a balance between authenticity, community well-being and sustainable growth.

The drafting process is being led by the Polytechnic University of Tirana (UPT), selected for its recognized expertise in heritage conservation, urban planning, and sustainable development. Supported by a multidisciplinary team of experts, UPT is committed to ensuring that the IMP serves as a well-thought and inclusive management framework. The process, set for completion by the end of 2025, will provide a cornerstone for future planning and decision-making, with the overarching objective of safeguarding the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) that defines Berat and Gjirokastra’s World Heritage status.

Albania is also strengthening its commitment to fully integrating Heritage Impact Assessments (HIAs) into its legal and administrative frameworks as a fundamental tool for managing change and preserving the property’s OUV. While HIAs are already being systematically required - particularly in response to increasing tourism pressures and the cumulative impact of development interventions - several key assessments will also be conducted as part of the ongoing IMP process. Additionally, efforts are underway to build local capacity in understanding and effectively implementing HIAs, reinforcing their role as a standard prerequisite for development projects within the historic centers.

The State Party expresses its gratitude to the World Heritage Committee, the World Heritage Centre, and its Advisory Bodies for their continued support and guidance in the protection and sustainable management of Berat and Gjirokastra. Their expertise and collaboration remain invaluable in ensuring that these historic centers continue to embody their OUV for future generations.

2. Response to the Decision of the World Heritage Committee

The report responds to Decision 46 COM 7B.2:

World Heritage Committee 46th session (New Delhi, 2024)

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined Document WHC/24/46.COM/7B,
2. Recalling Decisions **39 COM 7B.75**, **41 COM 7B.40**, **43 COM 7B.79**, **44 COM 7B.151** and **45 COM 7B.51** adopted at its 39th (Bonn, 2015), 41st (Krakow, 2017), 43rd (Baku, 2019), extended 44th (Fuzhou/online, 2021) and extended 45th (Riyadh, 2023) sessions respectively,
3. Welcomes the State Party's commitment to upgrade urban planning regulations for both the Berat and Gjirokastra components of the property, requests the State Party to clarify the interlinkages between the Integrated Management Plan (IMP) and the separate plans for the 'preservation, protection and administration' to:
 1. Ensure that all planning and management instruments work together to protect and maintain the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property,
 2. Harmonise the differences between the former regulations and the plans, and
 3. Make specific reference in the plans to the OUV and its attributes;
4. Reiterates its request to the State Party to develop an integrated urban conservation and development tool and to diversify its development plans for the property to stimulate a broad, resilient economic base for its future and recommends that it be developed in line with the implementation of the UNESCO 2011 Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape (HUL Recommendation);
5. Notes with regret that, despite its previous requests, the State Party has not fully implemented the project for the development of the IMP for the property in cooperation with the governmental and civil sectors, funded through international assistance provided by the World Heritage Fund, urges the State Party to further update the IMP as a matter of priority taking into account the comments and recommendations already made by the Advisory Bodies and actively involving the local authorities of Berat and Gjirokastra, and also requests the State Party to submit a pre-final draft to serve as a basis for any further assistance from the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies;
6. Further notes with regret the completion of the construction of the Gjirokastra bypass road without having implemented the requests of the Committee, and therefore further requests the State Party to urgently complete a full independent Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) of the Gjirokastra bypass road, to be submitted to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies;
7. Requests furthermore the State Party to undertake an integrated HIA to assess the impact of the numerous infrastructure and development projects within or in the wider setting of the property, including individual ongoing projects within the Project for Integrated Urban and Tourism Development (PIUTD), both individually and cumulatively, against the state of conservation, integrity and authenticity of the property at the time of its inscription, and to submit it to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies;
8. Notes with concern that the recommendations of the 2021 joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM Reactive Monitoring mission have not been implemented, and reiterates its request to the State Party to implement these in full;
9. Also notes with concern that details of all development projects that may affect the OUV of the property have not been submitted to the World Heritage Centre and reiterates its request to the State Party to:
 1. Submit the project details to the World Heritage Centre for review prior to any irreversible approval or decision, in accordance with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines, and
 2. Commission HIAs focusing on the OUV of the property in accordance with Paragraph 118bis of the Operational Guidelines and carried out in accordance with the

Guidance and Toolkit for Impact Assessments in a World Heritage Context, and recalls that such documents, or at least their executive summaries, should be submitted to the World Heritage Centre in one of the working languages of the Committee;

10. Requests moreover the State Party to continue its efforts to limit the occurrence of illegal construction activities in the property;
11. Finally requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 February 2025**, an updated report on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the above, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 47th session.

Responses to:

Para 3 & 4

Since 2008, when the Historic Centre of Berat joined that of Gjirokastra in the nomination in series, and a Management System of the two sites was proposed in the Joint Management Plan, little has changed. The Ministry, National Institute for Cultural Heritage, Municipalities of Berat and Gjirokastra, “*Committee for the Coordination of the Management Plan of the historic centres of Gjirokastra and Berat*”, and the respective Regional Directorates for Cultural Heritage based in the two cities are the building blocks of the management system.

The Ministry of Tourism, Culture, Youth and Sports (MTCYS) has been replaced subsequently by the Ministry of Culture (MC in 2013) and the Ministry of Economy, Culture and Innovation (MECI in 2024) in the role of general management coordination of the World Heritage property. The single most important novelty that the Ministry has brought to the management system in 2018, relates to the legal requirement of a Management Plan as a central instrument for the management of the heritage sites in the country (Law no. 27/2018 “*On the Cultural Heritage and Museums*”, Articles 45, 46, and 47).

The National Institute of Cultural Heritage (NICH), that has replaced the former Institute for Cultural Monuments (IMC), continues to play a triple role in the management of the historic centres of Berat and Gjirokastra through its representation in the “*Committee for the Coordination of the Management Plan of the historic centres of Gjirokastra and Berat*”, its supervisory role over the Regional Directorates for Cultural Heritage of Berat and Gjirokastra, and through its key role in the decision process for all conservation and development projects within the historic centres and their respective buffer zones.

The Municipalities of Gjirokastra and Berat continue to play an important role in the management of the respective historic centers. They are the main institutions facing the needs of their citizens, but also holders of the real power on the planning priorities, building permits and controlling of their respective territories. The substantial increase of the territories and population under their administration, following the recent National Administrative Reform, has only raised their profile, budgets, resources and possibilities for a more decisive role in the management of their respective World Heritage properties.

The “*Committee for the Coordination of the Management Plan of the historic centres of Gjirokastra and Berat*” has played only a formal role in the management of the World Heritage property, even if it has been originally designed as much more active and central to the process. The new Integrated Management Plan for the “Historic Centers of Berat and Gjirokastra” (IMP) that is being prepared, will address this issue and analyze carefully the reasons for this under-performance. It is expected also that the new IMP will provide recommendations for a better definition of the Committee’s composition, roles and responsibilities.

The Regional Directorates of Cultural Heritage based on the two respective cities continue to be the real ‘*boots on the ground*’ of the management system. This important role has been consolidated over the years since the first round of inscription on the World Heritage List, and it is the scope of the

new IMP to enhance, further define, and support with sufficient resources the important role of the Regional Directorates on the management of the World Heritage properties.

At the beginning of 2024 MECI and NICH decided to prioritize maintaining relations with the World Heritage Center and increase the capacities of the national Focal Point in its mission of keeping all institutions informed on the recommendations, standards and trends in the management of the World Heritage Sites. The experience accumulated in the last two decades has made the State Party aware of the needs to strengthen certain components of the existing management system, or reshape others. We look forward to using the process of preparation of the IMP as an opportunity to make sensible and comprehensible improvements.

Inclusion in the Law no. 27/2018 “*On the Cultural Heritage and Museums*”, articles 45, 46, and 47 of the requirements of the Management Plan as a central instrument for the management of the heritage sites in Albania, was an important step towards improvement of the management process in the country. However, the simple approval of the Law has not shown to be enough for the consolidation of this practice. On the other hand, the management experience of the last decades has clearly shown that different stakeholders have developed their own tools for the planning of urban and rural developments. These tools exist in a national and local level, and not always are designed to be inclusive in their character. World Heritage sites are not an exception, and it has become increasingly obvious that an IMP is a unique opportunity to trace a way forward for the heritage sites to develop in harmony with all goals and expectations of the different actors and stakeholders. This issue of inclusiveness of all group interests into a coherent and truly integrated plan, has become particularly pressing with the rapid development of the tourism industry and the pressure that it brings on the World Heritage Sites of Berat and Gjirokastra (Section 3 provides further data on this recent trend).

Planning authorities, development agencies and local governments are essential stakeholders that deserve maximum attention in the process of preparation of IMPs. Experience has shown that they are the main sources of ideas, transformations and development projects even in historic environments. Thus, the IMP is the only reasonable response to fragmentation of the planning processes. The legal base now exists (the Law no. 27/2018 “*On the Cultural Heritage and Museums*”) so that the approval of the IMP should play the leading role in the development of the historic site during the period covered by it. When it is prepared through a non-inclusive process, the risk is very high for the IMP to become useless or contradictory. MECI is committed to work constantly towards the goal of imposing an opened and inclusive process for the preparation of the IMP on one hand, and making it the baseline for any development planning within the heritage sites after its official approval. Other legal tools, such as the decisions of the Council of the Ministers for the Regulations of Historic Sites should be carefully studied in order not to conflict with the principles set out in the IMP.

Para 5

The State Party acknowledges the paramount importance and urgency of finalizing the Integrated Management Plan (IMP) for the Historic Centres of Berat and Gjirokastra to ensure the full protection and preservation of their Outstanding Universal Value (OUV). To this end, the IMP process was officially resumed in June 2024: building on renewed dialogue between relevant national and local partners, the valuable experience gained during the preparation of the initial draft, and the detailed recommendations provided by ICCROM and ICOMOS in 2023, the Terms of Reference (ToR) were revised to incorporate additional relevant aspects while maintaining the original focus of the International Assistance No. 2932, “*Development of Integrated Management Plan for the Historic Centres of Berat and Gjirokastra*,” approved by the World Heritage Centre in 2018.

More importantly, the updated ToR address now also recent and significant trends impacting the World Heritage property. These include the spectacular rise in tourism demand - Albania hosted 11.7 million visitors in 2024, representing a 15% increase compared to 2023 - and ongoing demographic changes, as highlighted by the 2024 National Census results, namely with very important shifts in Berat and Gjirokastra, including population decline, aging demographics, and changing household structures.

These trends underscore the pressing need for holistic solutions within the IMP, with key areas to be addressed during the drafting process now including: establishing a comprehensive management system; improving governance frameworks; harmonizing urban and tourism policies with heritage preservation; balancing tourism growth with the well-being of local communities; addressing the effects of demographic shifts on the historic centers; mitigating disaster risks; adapting to climate change; implementing sustainable visitor and transport strategies; fostering education and research initiatives; and strengthening stakeholder engagement, particularly with local communities.

The revised ToR were approved by the National Council of Material Cultural Heritage (NCMCH) through Decision No. 369, dated 27.09.2024, and by the National Council of Cultural Heritage Management (NCCHM) through Decision No. 6, on date 26.11.2024. The approved ToR is provided as Annex 1.

A partnership with the Polytechnic University of Tirana (UPT) for the drafting of the IMP was deemed necessary for several practical and well-founded reasons. UPT was chosen due to its proven track record in successfully conducting similar assessments as well as its comprehensive expertise in areas such as heritage conservation, urban planning, and sustainable development. Additionally, the university's academic and technical resources, established partnerships with key institutions, and strong local expertise all provide essential support. The involvement of UPT, not only guarantees the incorporation of modern, innovative solutions but also strengthens the local capacity to plan and manage heritage sites sustainably. Last but not least, this partnership fosters long-term ownership of the IMP, establishing also a much-needed foundation for ongoing research, monitoring, and adaptation.

The contract was signed on December 27, 2024, marking the start of the service, with an expected total duration of 12 months. During the initial phases of the process, specific focus is being placed on consolidating the existing information and key learnings from the first IMP draft, the 2023 ICCROM and ICOMOS recommendations, as well as analyzing the most recent trends and developments within the World Heritage property. A pre-final draft of the IMP is expected to be submitted to the World Heritage Center and its Advisory Bodies in fall 2025.

For a more detailed overview of the main deliverables expected and related content, see the indicative summary table below:

Expected Deliverables	Content
1. Inception Report	<p>The inception report should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A preliminary evaluation of the current situation, including the content of the current first draft of the IMP, and comments received from ICOMOS and ICCROM. - An overview of risks and challenges, taking into account key issues identified (Section 6.2 of the ToR), including the current management framework for the Historic Centers, limitations, or needs for improvement in the regulatory framework, the public perception of potential measures, other needs and key concerns to be addressed in the IMP. - A clear strategy for stakeholders' involvement. A specific emphasis should be placed on a strategy to mobilize and engage field actors in Berat and Gjirokastra, having a stake in the daily management of the historic centers. - A detailed work plan including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A detailed workplan for the preparation and delivery of the required deliverables and related preparations; • A detailed plan for mobilizing and engaging stakeholders.
2. First Draft of PMI	<p>A full first draft, prepared according to the specifications of this document, the legal framework, and applicable standards.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The draft should include a specific assessment of the impact of all infrastructure and development projects within the historic centers of Berat and Gjirokastra, implemented since the last management plan, both

	<p>individually and cumulatively, on the state of conservation, integrity, and authenticity of the property at the time of its inscription.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - This assessment must be conducted in conformity with the recommendations and requests of the WHC and Advisory Bodies and shall form a specific annex to the IMP.
3. Pre-Final Draft	The pre-final draft should serve as the basis for consultations with the World Heritage Center and its Advisory Bodies and incorporate their recommendations into the final version.
4. Final Version	The final version, for approval by the relevant institutions.

Building on the experience gained while producing the first draft of the IMP “*in-house*” within the National Institute of Cultural Heritage, as well as the recommendations from the World Heritage Centre and its Advisory Bodies, a broader range of expertise has been identified as essential for successfully completing this complex task. The partnership with the UPT facilitates access to a diverse pool of professionals who bring specialized knowledge to the process. The following 13 profiles constitute the minimum required expert team to finalize the development of the IMP:

- Cultural heritage management (team leader)
- Governance systems
- Risk management
- Local heritage
- Sustainable tourism
- Demographics
- Supporting specialists (community engagement, architectural conservation, archaeology, environmental issues, mobility, economics, legal matters)

This diverse national and/or international expertise will ensure a comprehensive, interdisciplinary approach to the development and implementation of the management plan for the World Heritage property of Berat and Gjirokastra.

Para 6 to 8

The State Party recognizes the important role of Heritage Impact Assessments (HIA) in managing change and safeguarding the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of its World Heritage properties. However, structural challenges such as limited national expertise in conducting HIAs and insufficient resources have systematically hindered in the past the ability to carry out thorough, rigorous assessments. For example, the Gjirokastra bypass project, completed to address long-standing traffic congestion in the historic center, proceeded without the benefit of a fully finalized HIA due to these constraints.

To address the World Heritage Committee’s requests, the State Party commits to ensuring that the requested HIAs are conducted as part of the reinitiated drafting of the Integrated Management Plan (IMP) for the “*Historic Centres of Berat and Gjirokastra*”, in collaboration with the Polytechnic University of Tirana. These include:

1. A post-factum independent HIA to assess the impact of the Gjirokastra bypass road; the document will include also a specific assessment of the landscape of the valley, its evolution and its use over time, and its relationship with the town morphology.
2. An integrated HIA to evaluate the cumulative effect of infrastructure and development projects within and around the property, since the last management plan, focusing on their effect on the property's state of conservation, integrity, and authenticity as recognized at the time of inscription.

These assessments will be included as a separate annexe to the final IMP document and are expected to be submitted to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies in the last trimester of 2025.

Efforts are also underway to institutionalize HIAs within Albania's legal framework, making them a mandatory prerequisite for development projects and integrating them into the legal framework applicable to the Historic Centers of Berat and Gjirokastra. In the interim, to ensure that future interventions are carefully planned and that their impacts on the OUV are minimized, the National Institute of Cultural Heritage through the National Council of Material Heritage (NCMCH) is systematically requesting that development proposals within the World Heritage property include HIAs.

Thus, in 2024, several projects in the Historic Centers of Berat and Gjirokastra were required to undergo HIA evaluations before proceeding further, as in the following cases:

- NCMCH Decision No.180 on date 21.06.2024 on "Postponing the decision for A. Cicaj individual property", Gorica Neighborhood, Berat;
- NCMCH Decision No.183 on date 21.06.2024 on "Postponing the decision for R. Oriza individual property", Gorica Neighborhood, Berat;
- NCMCH Decision No. 275 on date 26.07.2024 on "Approval in principle of the construction of the School "22 Tetori" in the buffer zone of the World Heritage property in Berat - upon compliance with the requirements, including the preparation of HIA, the project will be submitted for review to the World Heritage Center and its Advisory Bodies.
- NCMCH Decision No. 340 on date 13.09.2024 on "Postponing the decision on the construction of the 'Shkembi Road'", Berat Castle Neighborhood, - the project and related technical information has been submitted to the World Heritage Center and its Advisory Bodies. Further decision-making on this project will proceed after receiving feedback.
- NCMCH Decision No. 429 on date 18.10.2024 on "Approval of the UNESCO-ICMOS Report on the "Gjirokastra Castle Sustainable Management and Tourism Valorisation Masterplan" project. The feedback received from WHC through its Advisory Bodies has been communicated to the relevant partners.

Lastly, the State Party has identified national capacity development and specialized training as critical needs for the successful implementation of HIA processes. To address this, it has initiated dialogue with the World Heritage Centre on organizing a '*Capacity-Building Workshop for Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) in a World Heritage Context*'. This workshop, tailored to Albania's specific needs and part of ICOMOS's ongoing training series, will enhance knowledge and understanding among diverse stakeholders regarding the effectiveness of HIAs as a tool and process, rather than just a document, for preserving the OUV of World Heritage sites.

The State Party is committed to working closely with the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies to ensure the successful realization of these initiatives and to strengthen the integration of HIA processes into its heritage management framework.

Para 9

The State Party is fully aware of the importance of maintaining continuous dialogue with the World Heritage Centre (WHC) and its Advisory Bodies and expresses its appreciation for the guidance and support received in managing World Heritage properties. In recognition of the complexity of issues connected to the proper management, conservation, and protection of these sites and their buffer zones, we are committed to sustaining this dialogue and ensuring effective coordination between national institutions, the WHC, and Advisory Bodies. The State Party assures that no decision-making proceeds without prior consultation with the WHC and Advisory Bodies, ensuring that all actions are aligned with the preservation of the OUV of these sites. To enhance this collaboration, the State Party has strengthened the UNESCO Focal Point by allocating additional human resources, securing adequate funding, and granting enhanced administrative authority. As a result, regular communication with WHC

and Advisory Bodies remains a priority, as demonstrated by ongoing discussions on several important projects, including:

- The project "*Sustainable Management and Tourism Valorisation Masterplan of Gjirokastra Castle*" implemented by the Albanian Development Fund (ADF). Its technical content was transmitted to the WHC and Advisory Bodies in June 2024 for their input. After the report, including the recommendations received from the Advisory Bodies, was approved in October 2024, it was formally communicated to the relevant partners. Currently, cooperation with ADF is focused on evaluating the possibility of prioritizing components related to the conservation and restoration of the Castle.
- The project "*Enhancing Touristic Attractivity of Berat Castle by Improving Touristic Accessibility*" also implemented by the Albanian Development Fund, was submitted to the WHC and Advisory Bodies in November 2024. Further decision-making on this project will proceed after receiving feedback.
- The ongoing dialogue with the World Heritage Centre regarding the organization of a '*Capacity-Building Workshop on Heritage Impact Assessments (HIA) in a World Heritage Context*'. This workshop, customized to address Albania's specific needs and part of ICOMOS's broader training series, aims to enhance stakeholder understanding of HIAs as an effective tool and process, rather than merely a document, for preserving the OUV of World Heritage properties.
- Etc.

This enhanced coordination will continue to support the sustainable management and protection of our World Heritage sites.

Para 10

In Albania, the fight against illegal construction in historic centers remains a priority for national and local authorities. With the aim of preserving the OUV of the World Heritage property of Berat and Gjirokastra, the Albanian government has implemented a range of legal frameworks and policies, including stricter enforcement of zoning laws, the introduction of fines, and demolitions of unauthorized structures within protected areas.

These intensified measures have contributed to a noticeable decelerating trend in illegal construction activity. The Regional Directorate of Cultural Heritage of Gjirokastra reported only three illegal interventions in 2023, a considerable decline compared to previous years, though this number rose slightly to eight in 2024. Similarly, the Regional Directorate of Cultural Heritage of Berat observed a total of nine illegal interventions over the past two years, with three cases detected in 2023 and eight in 2024. While the slight uptick in 2024 calls for continued vigilance, the overall decrease in such activity demonstrates progress in curbing and stability in maintaining under control inappropriate interventions.

3. Other current conservation issues identified by the State(s) Party(ies) which may have an impact on the property's Outstanding Universal Value.

During the reporting period (January-December 2024), the Regional Directorates of Cultural Heritage in Berat and Gjirokastra completed more than 80 interventions on monuments and cultural heritage objects (including icons, etc.). These interventions were funded either directly by the State budget or through co-financing with monument owners. Such efforts are crucial for preserving historical assets, supporting sustainable tourism in alignment with the Historic Urban Landscape (HUL) approach, and maintaining the symbolic and educational significance of these sites for both local communities and international visitors. An indicative list of the interventions implemented is provided as Annex 3.

During the same period, the National Council for Material Cultural Heritage (NCMCH) has received, processed and deliberated upon 67 online applications for interventions of different kinds within the historic centers and their respective buffer zones of Berat and Gjirokastra. Decisions taken on Berat and Gjirokastra represent 21% (more than 1/5) of all projects discussed for the entire country in 2024. Of these interventions discussed during the last year for the World Heritage Site, 54% belong to Berat and 46% belong to Gjirokastra.

From Berat are received and processed 36 applications, of which almost 75% are restoration projects in the World Heritage property and its buffer zone. These restoration projects count for almost 5% of all listed structures within the boundaries of the World Heritage property and its buffer zone, which illustrates quantitatively the development pressure that tourism exerts of the World Heritage Site (most of the proposals relate to the needs of the owners to transform their properties into tourist hosting structures).

In the case of Gjirokastra, interventions within the boundaries of the World Heritage property and its buffer zone represent 55% of all applications in 2024 (much less compared to 75% of Berat). Here, the restoration project discussed by the NCMCH count for almost 4% of the listed structures (within the World Heritage property and its buffer zone), which is again slightly less than the 5% figure of Berat.

However, if put in the perspective of say 10 years period, Berat and Gjirokastra might feel the pressure of transforming/restoring about 50% and 40% respectively of all their historic centres and buffer areas. Even if only theoretically modelled, this development pressure will represent a threat to the authenticity of the sites during the next decade. Consequently, the Integrated Management Plan that is being prepared, is required to address this issue very seriously and propose ways forward through analysis of the cumulative effect of these interventions on the integrity and authenticity of the properties.

4. In conformity with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines, describe any potential major restorations, alterations and/or new construction(s) intended within the property, the buffer zone(s) and/or corridors or other areas, where such developments may affect the Outstanding Universal Value of the property, including authenticity and integrity.

In accordance with paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines, the following provides updates on the projects mentioned in the 2024 State of Conservation Report, as well as new projects.

Project Name	Status
BERAT	
P01 Restoration of the historic urban landscape of the Gorica quarter (PIUTD)	Completed
P03 Rehabilitation of the Gorica Castle trail & establishment of additional tourism opportunities around the monument (PIUTD)	Completed
P04 Creation of a car parking nearby the Old Gorica Bridge (PIUTD)	Completed
P05 Restoration of the historic urban landscape of Mangalem quarter (PIUTD)	Completed
P06 Restoration of the historic urban landscape of the Selamllek square (PIUTD)	Completed
P09 Regeneration of the area surrounding the Ethnographic Museum and Mihal Komneno road (PIUTD)	Completed
P11 Streetscape beautification along Antipatrea road in the Town centre (PIUTD)	Completed
P12 Urban upgrading of Iliaz Vrioni square (PIUTD)	Completed
P15 Tourism signage and interpretation (PIUTD)	Completed

(NEW PROJECT) Smart parking at the Berat Castle [funded by the Albanian Development Fund]	Started implementation
(NEW PROJECT) Enhancing Touristic Attractivity of Berat Castle by Improving Touristic Accessibility 1. Construction of the new "Shkëmbi Road" 2. Riverbank protection along Osum River <i>(An overview of this project is provided in Annex 3)</i>	Design Phase The project and related technical information has been submitted to the World Heritage Center and its Advisory Bodies. Further decision-making on this project will proceed after receiving feedback.
(NEW PROJECT) Management Plan for the Tourism Destination Berat Castle, funded by the Albanian-American Development Foundation, a partnership that includes the Berat Municipality and the Ministry of Economy, Culture and Innovation. Expected outputs: - A Destination Management Plan for Berat Castle, outlining clear strategies for site management, improving the visitor experience, and safeguarding cultural heritage. - A set of recommendations for implementing conservation and enhancement strategies, with active participation from the local community and both public and private stakeholders	Implementation phase.
GJIROKASTRA	
Identification, Design of Priority Measures to Address Urgent Security Concerns and Prevention of Loss of Historic Structures in Gjirokastra Castle (PIUTD)	Completed
Underground Parking and Revitalization of Çerçiz Topulli square (GOA)	Finished
Gjirokastra Castle Sustainable Management and Tourism Valorization Master plan (PIUTD)	Design Phase Currently, cooperation with ADF is focused on evaluating the possibility of prioritizing components related to the conservation and restoration of the Castle.
Mobility Plan and Detailed Design of Project Investments for Integrated Urban Upgrading of Gjirokastra (PIUTD)	Implementation of 2 from 6 packages (P.1.1, P.1.2).

5. Public access to the state of conservation report

The State Party of Albania agrees to the full publication of this report on the World Heritage Centre's website.

6. Signature of the Authority



MINISTRY OF ECONOMY, CULTURE AND INNOVATION

NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF CULTURAL HERITAGE

GENERAL DIRECTOR

JOLI MITROJORGJI

List of Annexes

- Annex 1** Terms of Reference for the Preparation of the Integrated Management Plan (Imp) for the “*Historic Centers of Berat and Gjirokastra*”.
- Annex 2** List of interventions conducted by the Regional Directorates for Cultural Heritage of Berat and Gjirokastra during 2024.
- Annex 3** Project Overview: Enhancing Touristic Attractivity of Berat Castle by Improving Touristic Accessibility.



PROJECT TERMS OF REFERENCE
REGARDING THE PREPARATION OF THE INTEGRATED
MANAGEMENT PLAN (IMP) FOR THE “HISTORIC CENTERS OF
BERAT AND GJIROKASTRA”

- A SERIAL WORLD HERITAGE PROPERTY –

September 2024

(UNOFFICIAL TRANSLATION)

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1. GENERAL OVERVIEW

1.1 Introduction

Set against a dynamic, contrasting rocky landscape, Gjirokastra's Historic Center rises almost in its midst, perched on a sharply contoured hill with steep slopes. Atop it stands the castle—the city's birthplace and for a long time its main focal point. The city itself stretches across rugged terrain on a commanding hill, naturally suited for military fortification. Gjirokastra gained its importance due to a strategic location that offered control over the Drino Valley—one of the main routes linking the port of Durrës and central Albania with Greece and the Byzantine Empire.

The Historic Center of Berat marks the origins of the city of Berat. It lies along the edge of the fertile Myzeqe Plain, at the western boundary of the Osum River Valley. Known as the “head of Myzeqe,” the city administered the surrounding region and controlled the passage through the Osum Valley—one of the principal routes connecting the coastal lowlands to the mountainous interior.¹

1.2 Legal Framework

By Decision of the Council of Ministers No. 172, dated June 2, 1961, Berat and Gjirokastra—along with the Old Bazaar in Kruja and the underground area of Durrës—were among the first urban ensembles granted state protection. For Berat, its zoning plan and associated regulations came into force under two Council of Ministers decisions: the first (Decision No. 172) designated Berat a “museum city,” while the second (Decision No. 170, dated June 2, 1961) approved the city's administrative regulations, accompanied by the city's zoning plan.

The same principles used to recognize Berat as a museum city served as the basis for protecting Gjirokastra under Law No. 1886, dated June 10, 1973, which approved regulations for safeguarding, restoring, and administering Gjirokastra as a museum city. These principles also guided protection efforts for other historic centers or ensembles in Korça, Shkodër, Elbasan, Vlorë, Tirana, and elsewhere.²

Because of its outstanding universal value, Gjirokastra's Historic Center was inscribed on the World Heritage List in 2005. In 2008, the World Heritage property was expanded to include the Historic Center of Berat, creating a serial World Heritage property. Together, these two historic centers are recognized as a single property on the World Heritage List, preserved as “rare examples of well-preserved Ottoman-era towns” in the Balkans. They are safeguarded under Cultural Criteria (iii) and (iv) of the Operational Guidelines, as follows:

Criteria (iii): Berati and Gjirokastra provide remarkable evidence of the diversity of urban communities in the Balkans and of longstanding ways of life that have now nearly disappeared. Gjirokastra's urban form and dwellings reflect a fortress city built by distinguished landowners with direct ties to central authorities. Meanwhile, Berat retains traces of a more independent lifestyle centered on artisanal and commercial activities.

Criteria (iv): Together, Gjirokastra and Berat offer extraordinary examples of diverse monuments and vernacular urban dwellings from the classical Ottoman period, building on various medieval cultures and marked by a peaceful coexistence with a significant Christian minority—particularly evident in Berat.³

¹ Baçe, Apollon; “Qyteti i fortifikuar i Beratit”; Monumentet 1971/2

² Riza, Emin; “Qyteti muze i Beratit, arritje dhe perspektiva”; Monumentet 1990 /2

³ Official UNESCO website, <https://www.unesco.org/en/list/569>

The historic centers of Gjirokastra and Berat are protected under Law No. 27/2018 “On Cultural Heritage and Museums” and its respective sub-legal acts, namely:

- Decision of the Council of Ministers No. 827, dated 28.12.2023 “On declaring a zone in the museum city of Berat as an immovable cultural asset (‘historic center’), determining its protective zone, and approving its plan for preservation, protection, and administration.”
- Decision of the Council of Ministers No. 764, dated 20.12.2023 “On declaring a zone in the museum city of Gjirokastra as an immovable cultural asset (‘historic center’), determining its protective zone, and approving its plan for preservation, protection, and administration.”

These two historic centers are also protected under the 1972 World Heritage Convention, owing to their international status as a serial World Heritage Site (2005, 2008).

Within the “Historic Center and Protected Area” of Gjirokastra, around **69 First-Category Monuments and 323 Second-Category Monuments** enjoy special legal protection.

In Berat’s “Historic Center and Protected Area,” approximately **87 First-Category Monuments and 360 Second-Category Monuments** enjoy special legal protection.

The broader framework for the planning and development of the territories that include the Historic Centers of Berat and Gjirokastra is governed by two particularly important laws: Law No. 139/2015 “On Local Self-Government” and Law No. 107/2014 “On Territorial Planning and Development.”

The General Urban Plans (PPV) for Berat and Gjirokastra are complete and were approved by the National Territorial Council (KKT) as follows: PPV Berat on December 29, 2016, and PPV Gjirokastra on February 8, 2017.

Annex No. 1 and Annex No. 2 present the zoning boundaries for both historic centers and their protected areas, as well as the lists of cultural assets preserved within those boundaries.

1.3 Beneficiaries

The beneficiaries of this project are MEKI, IKTK, the Regional Directorates of Cultural Heritage in Gjirokastra (DRTK Gjirokastra) and Berat (DRTK Berat), as well as the Municipalities of Gjirokastra and Berat.

1.4 Description of the Contracting Authority

The National Institute of Cultural Heritage (IKTK) is the contracting authority responsible for preparing the terms of reference for this Integrated Management Plan.

IKTK’s Mission:

IKTK’s primary task is to preserve, protect, conserve, restore, and enhance tangible cultural heritage monuments and sites across the Republic of Albania. It conducts research and scientific work, ensures the implementation of national and international cultural heritage legislation, and carries out, supervises, and certifies interventions on immovable monuments and their integral movable objects throughout the country. It also oversees professional qualification, grants authorizations, and sets restoration criteria.

In fulfilling its mission, IKTK undertakes all necessary measures to identify, investigate, safeguard, fully document, scientifically conserve, restore, and promote cultural heritage monuments and

sites. IKTK collaborates with the Regional Directorates of Cultural Heritage, which, under Law No. 27/2018 “On Cultural Heritage and Museums,” operate under its coordination and supervision.

2. BRIEF HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

2.1 Gjirokastra

Gjirokastra originated as a military and administrative fortress dating back to the 13th century. Unlike many other Balkan towns, it did not begin as a craft center but rather as a community for large Albanian landowners and Ottoman officials—an aspect that shaped both the character of the city and its homes.

The earliest known reference to Gjirokastra appears in 1336, from the chronicler John Kantakouzenos, who, among other events, mentions an Albanian uprising against the Byzantine Empire. In his writings, he twice refers to Gjirokastra as “Argyrokastron,” first calling it a city, then a fortress.

During the 13th century, Gjirokastra and its surrounding regions were ruled by the Gjin Zenebishi family. The Ottoman Empire, which expanded into Europe at the close of the 14th century, brought Gjirokastra under its control in 1419—a rule that lasted nearly 500 years, until 1912. At that time, the city comprised 163 households. It flourished for more than a century as the capital of the Albanian Sanjak (an Ottoman administrative unit) until Delvina replaced it under the reign of Sultan Suleiman the Magnificent (1520–1566).

By the early 15th century, a neighborhood and the town’s bazaar—referred to by the traveler Çelebi as the “Pazari i Kalasë” (Castle Bazaar)—had already developed outside the fortress walls, in the area now known as the “Pazari i vjetër” (Old Bazaar). Historical records and Ottoman tax registers suggest that Gjirokastra expanded beyond the fortress walls between the 14th and 16th centuries.

Serving as the seat of the local Ottoman judge (kadi), Gjirokastra’s strategic position and fertile surroundings helped it remain influential. By 1583, its population had nearly doubled from its pre-Ottoman level, and it continued to grow into the 17th century. By around the third quarter of the 17th century—based on Çelebi’s accounts—the city had nearly reached its present-day extent, albeit with lower building density. Its main urban layout had already taken shape.

Ali Pasha of Tepelena seized Gjirokastra in 1811. Born in 1744 near the small town of Tepelena, he rose from leading a band of brigands to serving as the regional governor (Pasha) of Epirus. Under his rule, Gjirokastra became a strategic and commercial hub between his twin strongholds of Tepelena and Ioannina (Janina), laying the groundwork for its prosperity. This era saw unprecedented growth and the construction of the large, distinctive homes that still define the city’s appearance today. Nevertheless, Ali Pasha’s ambition to fortify himself against the Ottoman Empire ultimately failed; Sultan Mahmud II deposed and executed him in Ioannina in 1822. After Ali Pasha’s death, Gjirokastra continued to develop as an Ottoman administrative, commercial, and agricultural center.⁴

⁴ Doempke S., Lulo A., Petrela S.; “Katër qytete historike në Ballkanin Jugperëndimor”; GCDO; Tiranë; 2012

2.2 Berat

Berat's history as a populated center dates to around 2600 BCE, as indicated by archaeological evidence. By the 4th century BCE, it had evolved into a proto-urban settlement encircled by powerful walls, marking the beginning of one of the important Illyrian cities. It boasted a rich and nearly unbroken urban life. The destructive Roman campaign in 200 BCE—retaliation for local resistance—targeted both its encircling walls and its inhabitants but proved relatively short-lived in its impact. The city's prominence grew again in the late antique period (4th–6th century CE).

Through the medieval era, Berat witnessed important events involving conquests and resistance under various states, with the Byzantine Empire playing a key role. In 1417, the Ottomans captured Berat, and after nearly five centuries of Ottoman rule, it became part of the newly established Albanian state.

Despite political and social changes over the centuries—and even as the city's name shifted from Antipatria (according to traditional belief) to Pulheriopolis, Belgrad, and eventually Berat—the core ethno-cultural traits of its people remained intact. Nevertheless, its inhabitants actively engaged in the evolving historical and social context, as evidenced by monuments from different eras. These include fortifications, religious buildings (many containing rich artistic treasures), and notable examples of vernacular architecture.⁵

3. BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE CULTURAL PROPERTY

The Historic Centers of Gjirokastra and Berat are living proof of the urban and architectural heritage of Albania.

3.1 Gjirokastra

The main components of Gjirokastra's Historic Center are:

- The castle, which served both as a palace for the ruler and as a military fortification.
- The bazaar, an area dedicated to craftsmanship and trade.
- Places of worship (such as churches, mosques, and teqes).
- Residential neighborhoods - traditional architecture.

The Castle

Positioned high above the residential neighborhoods, the castle has always played a dominant role in the city's appearance, although its functional significance began to decline around the mid-19th century. Current scholarship places the original construction of Gjirokastra's castle in the mid-13th century, based on known historical sources and structural evidence. Even today, the castle stands in a commanding position thanks to its elevated setting and the grandeur of its walls. It is undoubtedly one of the city's most visited landmarks and, for many years, has served as the gathering place for major folkloric festivals.

The Bazaar Ensemble

Initially, the bazaar spread along the ridge outside the castle's northern gate, an area still referred to as the "Pazari i Vjetër" (Old Bazaar). By the 1580s, the city had more than 400 homes and was a thriving trade center, adding to its administrative importance. In the 17th century, the Ottoman governor Memi Pasha planned and built a new commercial district on the western slope of the

⁵ Riza, Emin; "Qyteti muze i Beratit, arritje dhe perspektiva"; Monumentet 1990/2

hill, known as the “Pazari i Ri” (New Bazaar), hereafter referred to simply as the Bazaar. Centered on a key junction called “Qafa e Pazarit”—where five roads converge, connecting it to various residential neighborhoods—the bazaar included a mosque specifically built to serve the local artisans. Even today, “Qafa” remains the hub of the historic city.

The bazaar was almost completely destroyed by fire and rebuilt in the 1750s. After another catastrophic fire in the 19th century, it was reconstructed once more. While the original street layout was preserved, the roads were widened, and the surviving buildings date from this period. In its heyday in the early 20th century, the Gjirokastra bazaar housed roughly 410 workshops and served as a major crafts center for southern Albania.⁶

Church of Saint Sotira

Located at the northernmost edge of the castle in the Old Bazaar neighborhood, the Church of Saint Sotira was built in 1784. It follows a typical Orthodox design, with a rectangular plan oriented along an east–west axis. Also called the “Old Metropolis,” it once served as the seat of the local Orthodox bishop. Saint Sotira is a three-aisle basilica with a nartex, exonarthex, and altar area. The central nave is wide, while the two side aisles are narrower, all covered by barrel vaults. Three apses form the altar section. Later, a bell tower was added at the church entrance.

The Bazaar Mosque

The Bazaar Mosque is the only remaining one of Gjirokastra’s 15 original mosques; no one is entirely sure why it was spared. After 1967, the building—with its tall domed ceiling—was temporarily used as a circus venue for acrobats. With the end of the communist regime, the mosque was restored. It had originally been part of Memi Pasha’s 17th-century plan for the Bazaar. Destroyed by fire in the 18th century, it was rebuilt around 1754–1755, along with the rest of the bazaar. Intentionally placed right against the street, the mosque created a small row of enclosed shops whose rental income helped fund its upkeep. To this day, the Muslim community is one of the largest property owners in the bazaar. Most recently, the mosque was restored thanks to funding from TIKA and under the supervision of IKTK.

The Mosque at Meçite, Seven Springs, and the Hammam

At the bottom of a small stream, the complex of a mosque, hammam, and seven water springs—known collectively as “Shtatë Krojet” (Seven Springs)—once formed the social center of the Meçite neighborhood and was among Gjirokastra’s few public open spaces. The springs were built on the foundations of the 17th-century Meçite Mosque. The ruins of the minaret tower lie just to the right of the 48 fountains. Renowned for its refined rooftop decoration, the mosque was reached by stairs built above the springs. It was destroyed in 1967 during the regime’s anti-religious campaign, causing the area to lose its social function. The unique water sources here may have been the original reason for constructing a religious site in this location. The springs themselves still flow, and the central fountain features a beautiful Ottoman inscription.

The Teqe

Dating to the 17th century or earlier, the Teqe at the Kodra e Shtufit (across the city from the castle) was another principal Bektashi Sufi center. One can still see the remains of seven türbes (mausoleums). The main türbe, located at the very top of the hill, contains the graves of three significant dervishes.

Traditional Architecture

⁶ Doempke S., Lulo A., Petrela S.; “Katër qytete historike në Ballkanin Jugperëndimor”; GCDÖ; Tiranë; 2012

The traditional Gjirokastra house, known for its prominent features and notable achievements in both overall composition and specific architectural and structural elements, occupies a special place in the typology of Albanian urban dwellings.

Its development began in relatively distant times and concluded around the late 19th century. Various factors shaped its design, including residents' lifestyles, the level of economic and social development, climate, available space and materials, building traditions, and the characteristics of the construction site.

Dwellings form the primary building blocks of the city, not only in sheer mass but also in their strong, monumental character, creating distinctive highlights within the diverse yet cohesive urban landscape. Gjirokastra stands out for its originality, both in the style of its houses and in the city layout itself. Fortified houses prevailed here until the late 19th century, when Gjirokastra's residential buildings lost their defensive function.

Today, Gjirokastra still preserves ensembles and neighborhoods dating from the late 17th to the early 20th century. Although these fortified houses share notable similarities with those in other Albanian cities, such as Berat and Shkodra, Gjirokastra followed its own path of development, justifying the recognition of a uniquely "Gjirokastrite" dwelling type. The city's steep terrain significantly influenced house design, with older, more basic models typically oriented perpendicular to the slope.⁷

Reflecting these influences, Gjirokastra's traditional houses appear in three main variants:

1. "Perpendikulari" (called the perpendicular type by G. Strazimiri) – the simplest and oldest form, originally two stories and later three, built entirely of stone masonry.
2. The one-wing house, a later development.
3. The two-wing house, also a more recent evolution.

All these variants continued to be built, serving as one of the primary indicators of social hierarchy within the community.

A defining feature of Gjirokastra's traditional houses is their defensive character, noted by researchers such as A. Psalidha, G. Hahn, M. Shuflaj, J. Burkard, L. Rei, A. Baldacci, and B. Kolev.

Because of this protective quality, some scholars (e.g., E. Riza) have suggested the term "fortified house" rather than "urban tower," as proposed by the ethnographer Rt. Zojzi. This distinction aims to differentiate these buildings from the broader category of structures commonly referred to as "kullë" (tower).

3.2 Berat

Human settlement in this area dates to the Bronze Age, while the 4th century BCE marks its evolution from a proto-urban settlement into a fortified urban center. Over its 2,400-year existence, the castle and its walls have continuously mirrored the city's history through multiple expansions, destructions, and reconstructions. Each rebuilding phase incorporated the military techniques of its time. The castle walls show evidence of the city's major historical periods: the Illyrian Period, the Byzantine Period, the Era of the Albanian Feudal Principalities, the Early Ottoman Period, and the Era of the Great Albanian Pashaliks.

Main Components of the Berat Historic Center:

- The Castle
- Places of Worship (churches, mosques, and teqes)
- Residential Neighborhoods – Traditional Architecture

⁷ Riza, Emin; "Banesa e fortifikuar Gjirokastrite"; Monumentet 1971/1

The castle, where the city originated, presents a mosaic of construction phases. Its earliest Illyrian phase, dating to the 4th century BCE and built with massive carved-stone walls—large stretches of which still survive—established the defensive perimeter that remained virtually unchanged for 22 centuries. Ancient limestone blocks were often reused in subsequent reconstructions. In the 13th century, a fortified courtyard was added in front of the main entrance, alongside the construction of the castle itself, whose walls were strengthened by six towers. Later, the southeastern section was separated as an inner citadel, serving as the seat of the city's elite. Further expansions and reconstructions occurred in the early 19th century under Ali Pasha of Tepelena.

Today, the fortress primarily exhibits Byzantine-Ottoman architectural elements in its surrounding walls, featuring 24 towers and 5 entrances, with only a few remnants of the earliest ancient phase. The main gate, located on the northern side and accompanied by a fortified courtyard and corridor, dates from an early 13th-century reconstruction when Michael Komnenos, Despot of Epirus, held power—his influence is evident in the castle's walls. At the top of the hill rises another 13th-century fortification, the garrison castle (Acropolis II), fitted with two entrances. It served as a sanctuary for the military garrison and local nobility in the event the first defensive perimeter was overtaken.

The castle of Berat, built on the right bank of the Osum River atop a steep hill at an altitude of 187 meters, occupied a strategically defensive position. Organically integrated with the rocky hill, it attests to an unbroken urban life from the 4th century BCE—making Berat a 2,400-year-old city. Ways of life that have almost vanished today were once commonplace here. Berat experienced a long period of conquests and, simultaneously, a tradition of religious tolerance.

- The city began as an Illyrian settlement, and later, in the 3rd century BCE, it became a fortress-town known as “Antipatrea.”
- In the 2nd century BCE, the Romans called it “Albanorum Opidum” (the fortress of Arbër). From the 5th to the 9th centuries CE, the city was known as “Pulheriopolis” and served as a bishopric.
- In the first half of the 6th century, it appears in Emperor Justinian's list of fortifications under the name “Antipagrai.”
- During the Bulgarian occupation, which lasted about 150 years (9th–11th centuries), the city was renamed “Belgrad” (white city), from which its current name “Berat” is derived.
- At the beginning of the 13th century, widespread renovations took place under Michael Komnenos, Despot of Epirus, including the addition of several towers and wall sections.
- The castle was later expanded, particularly under the Albanian feudal principalities ruled by the Muzaka family (13th–14th centuries). Within the fortress walls, churches featuring precious frescoes and icons were constructed, and an iconographic school was established.
- In the early Ottoman period, the city came under Turkish control.
- After the Ottoman conquest, Berat remained under the Archbishopric of Ohrid until 1767. During the Ottoman era, new churches were built both inside and outside the fortress.
- The last major reconstruction work on the Castle dates to the 18th century, during the era of the large Albanian pashaliks. Ahmet Kurt Pasha rebuilt the fortress in 1768.

Religious monuments in Berat are abundant. In their present state, only a few fragments attest to early Christian structures. Among the oldest surviving buildings, dating to the 13th–14th centuries, are the renowned trio of churches—St. Mary of Blachernae and the Church of the Holy Trinity inside the encircling walls of the Castle, as well as St. Michael's Church, perched on the steep southern rock face enclosed by the fortress's 13th-century lateral walls. Built in a cross-in-square style, these churches stand out for their dynamic forms and ceramic-plastic decorations, aligning them with contemporary architectural typologies. After a pause linked to the Turkish conquest, church construction resumed, generally preferring the basilical type and simpler chapels. Notably intensive building and rebuilding activity took place within the fortress's churches.

Alongside more modestly sized structures with simple exteriors, the 17th–18th centuries also saw the construction or reconstruction of relatively large churches, such as the Church of the Annunciation (Vangjelizmo) and the Cathedral of St. Mary—both located within the Castle.

The Turkish conquest introduced a new repertoire of religious architecture to Berat. Mosques and *teqes* are numerous and hold considerable value. The earliest mosques date to the 15th century and feature halls covered by pitched roofs; from the 17th century onward, domed mosques also appeared. Among Berat's mosques, the remains of the so-called “Red Mosque” (15th century), the ruins of the King Mosque (also 15th century, rebuilt in the 18th–19th centuries), the Lead Mosque (1553–54), considered one of the most remarkable examples in this category, and the Bachelor's Mosque (1827) stand out. The latter was shaped by the steep terrain, much like the city's houses. Among Berat's *teqes*, the Helveti *Teqe*, built in 1782, is noteworthy as a distinguished example of Islamic architecture in Albania. Christian religious buildings in particular are distinguished by their rich artistic heritage, evident in mural paintings, panel icons, and woodcarving. The rather plain exteriors contrast sharply with the opulent interiors of the 16th–19th-century churches. Several famous names in Albania's medieval painting tradition—Onufri, his son Nikolla, and other, anonymous artists—are closely linked to Berat. They worked in both mural and panel painting, producing notable achievements characterized by strong creative individuality and broad artistic skill. Exquisite woodcarving, visible in the Cathedral's iconostasis, became an integral part of artistic creation in the 18th–19th centuries.

In addition to its significant defensive and religious architecture, the city of Berat preserves a vast and precious tradition of vernacular architecture—here synonymous with the “popular” dwelling. In terms of both value and the relatively high number of examples, Berat can be compared only to Gjirokastra; jointly, they form a serial World Heritage Site.

Much like Gjirokastra, Berat retains complete ensembles of vernacular buildings, chiefly from the 18th and 19th centuries. Understandably, urban ensembles have proven more enduring over time, while houses, as the fundamental component of vernacular architecture, exhibit a more dynamic progression influenced by the socio-economic conditions of their era. Correctly interpreting this genuine documentary resource leads naturally to an understanding of the society's character and features in the places where these structures were built.

The majority of Berat's architectural fabric, which defines its identity as a “museum city,” dates primarily to the 18th and 19th centuries, although earlier structures are not excluded. As a rule, the broader urban design of the old neighborhoods predates that time. Berat's cohesive ensembles, with their rational yet spontaneously lyrical layouts, rank among the finest examples of Albanian vernacular architecture. Their perfect integration with the terrain, dynamic skyline, pronounced compactness, and harmonious composition characterize Berat's neighborhoods, each with its own specific features, but united organically into one urban whole. The marked typological variety of houses—despite a somewhat narrow functional repertoire—has allowed for broad interpretive freedom and creativity, yielding no sense of monotony despite clear normative boundaries.

Also worthy of note is the extensive typological diversity of Berat's vernacular buildings and their similarly distinctive urban design solutions. The city's creators, talented Albanian craftsmen bearing a wealth of professional knowledge passed down through generations, were never locked into rigid or widely familiar templates. In each circumstance—especially in the planning and architecture of steep sites—they showed a keen creative instinct and practicality, devising solutions that demonstrate real maturity and inventiveness.

3.3 Museums

3.3.1 Gjirokastra

Muzeu Kombëtar i Armëve (National Arms Museum)

Opened in 1971, this museum occupies part of what was once an Italian-built prison at the top of the castle's largest tower. On display are Albanian weapons used during the independence struggles of 1912 and 1920, as well as those employed by Albanian partisans in World War II, alongside various trophies from that conflict. The collection also includes a small selection of socialist realist paintings from a much larger body of work.

Muzeu i Gjirokastrës (Gjirokastra Museum)

Housed in one of the Castle's galleries, this is the first museum of its kind to illuminate the history of the city and its surrounding region, while also highlighting some of its most notable historical figures. Artifacts on display include archaeological finds—especially from recent excavations at Adrianopolis—Ottoman-era weapons, and items from the Communist period.

Muzeu Etnografik i Gjirokastrës (Gjirokastra Ethnographic Museum)

Standing on the site of the former childhood home of Enver Hoxha—Albania's communist dictator from 1944 until 1985—this building was constructed in 1966 after the original house was destroyed by fire. It was modeled after a traditional Gjirokastrite residence, incorporating many classic cultural elements. From 1966 to 1991, the premises served as the National Liberation War Museum; in 1991, they were repurposed to create the current Ethnographic Museum.

3.3.2 Berat

Qendra Muzeore (QM) Berat (Berat Museum Center)

Qendra Muzeore Berat is a specialized archival institution with “national museum” status, operating under the Ministry of Culture and based in the city of Berat. It oversees the Onufri Iconographic Museum and the Ethnographic Museum.

Muzeu Ikonografik Onufri (Onufri Iconographic Museum)

Located within the “Dormition of St. Mary” Cathedral in Berat Castle since February 27, 1986, this museum is named in honor of Onufri, the 16th-century master of Albanian iconographic painting.

Muzeu Etnografik (Ethnographic Museum)

Situated in the protected area near the historic center (the Mangalem and Kala neighborhoods), this museum was established in 1979 within a traditional two-story city house, featuring a portico (*çardak*) on one side. Built in the early 18th century, it retains many of Berat's classic architectural features.

4. Ongoing Projects

No.	PROJECTS IN PROGRESS ADF	MUNICIPALITY	FINANCED BY / PROGRAM
1	Construction of the bypass in the historic center of Gjirokastra (Nanxa Bridge – The Large Bridges of Dunavat)	Gjirokastra	State Budget - GOA
2	Construction of the parking facility and supporting spaces in Gjirokastra	Gjirokastra	State Budget - IVR
3	Rehabilitation of the bazaar's cobblestone roads	Gjirokastra	PIUTD
4	Integrated urban improvement of the museum city of Gjirokastra	Gjirokastra	PIUTD
5	The Museum System – Gjirokastra	Gjirokastra	PIUTD

6	Identification and development of priority measures to address urgent safety concerns and prevent the loss of heritage structures in the Gjirokastra Castle.	Gjirokastra	PIUTD
7	Technical Assistance – Concept, Design, and Supervision / Urban Improvement of Gjirokastra (Line 7)	Gjirokastra	PIUTD
8	Technical Assistance – The Mobility Plan and Design – The Investment Project for the Integrated Urban Improvement of Gjirokastra	Gjirokastra	PIUTD
9	Technical Assistance – The Sustainable Management and Tourism Enhancement Master Plan for Gjirokastra Castle (Project)	Gjirokastra	PIUTD
10	Urban Requalification of the New Ring Road	Berat	State Budget – GOA
11	Construction of the parking facility and supporting spaces in Berat	Berat	State Budget - IVR
12	Rehabilitation of the cobblestone road “Mihal Komneno” leading up to the Berat Castle	Berat	PIUTD
13	Improvement of the “Muzak Topia” vehicular access roads in Berat Castle	Berat	PIUTD
14	Integrated Urban Improvement of Berat (Packages 1–15)	Berat	PIUTD
15	Integrated Urban Improvement of Berat – Package 1 – Gorica	Berat	PIUTD
16	The City of Integrated Urban Improvement Berat – Package 02 (Antipatrea + Iliaz Vrioni & Zvernec Benja)	Berat	PIUTD
17	The City of Integrated Urban Improvement Berat – Ethnographic Museum and Mihal Komneno 02 Package (Selamlleku)	Berat	PIUTD
18	Technical Assistance – The Concept and Design for the Integrated Urban Improvement of Berat and Përmet (Lines 12 and 14)	Berat	PIUTD
19	Enhancement of Cultural Tourism Potential through Interventions at Berat Castle	Berat	TLED
20	Increasing the Tourism Offer in Natural Areas across the Berat Region by Improving Accessibility and Adventure Tourism Infrastructure in Tomorr Park and the Osum River Valley The Museum System and Tourist Attractions in Berat’s Historic Areas	Berat	TLED

5. THE NEED FOR THE IMP

The first management plan for the Historic Center of Gjirokastra was drawn up in 2005 as part of the process of preparing the World Heritage nomination dossier.

In 2008, again in the context of preparing the dossier for a Serial World Heritage nomination (this time including the Historic Center of Berat), an Integrated Management Plan (IMP) was drafted for both historic centers. This IMP covered a five-year period and was developed through close collaboration between local authorities and heritage institutions, with technical assistance provided by the UNESCO Venice Office. Although it provided insight into the different characteristics of the subzones within the Protected Area, it did not progress through the necessary approval stages at the national level or from the Municipal Councils of both cities. Nevertheless, it served as an important reference point for national and regional heritage institutions regarding the subzoning of protected areas and differentiated criteria for their conservation and protection. The current regulations of both Historic Centers are based on the core principles presented in that IMP.

In 2012, the Municipality of Berat participated as a partner in the SUSCULT program, co-financed by the European Union, which included several World Heritage Sites from the Southeast Europe subregion. As part of this program, the Municipality of Berat prepared a Management Plan for the Historic Center of Berat, following the example of the nearly expired first IMP. Although this new plan for Berat was a positive step, it did not encompass the Historic Center of Gjirokastra and thus could not be considered an Integrated Management Plan.

The need for an updated and integrated Management Plan has been repeatedly emphasized in all World Heritage Committee (WHC) decisions after 2012. In 2012, the ICOMOS Reactive

Monitoring Mission to the Historic Centers noted that “*the two historic towns of Berat and Gjirokastra are not managed as a single property.*” Consequently, through Decision 37 COM 7B.70, paragraph 5, the WHC requested the State Party to “establish as soon as possible a comprehensive management structure for the property, which will be responsible for monitoring and regulating unauthorized constructions, and for ensuring consistency in heritage management approaches across the entire World Heritage property.”

Moreover, in 2015, Decision 39 COM 7B.75, paragraph 4, called on the State Party to “*develop a comprehensive integrated management plan, including a risk management component to address natural and/or human-induced disaster threats.*”

The 2017 World Heritage Committee Decision No. 41 COM 7B.40 reiterated “the fundamental and urgent need for a comprehensive Integrated Management Plan (IMP) and adequate control mechanisms for the Historic Centers and their protected areas.” It also expressed regret that, despite repeated requests, no progress had been reported regarding the development of such an IMP for this property, and it asked the State Party to develop, as a priority, a comprehensive IMP that included a risk management component addressing natural and/or human-made threats, and to establish “an integrated tool for conservation and urban development, based on detailed surveying and documentation of all buildings and environmental features in the historic urban area and its wider context, using where necessary the approach of the 2011 Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape (HUL), and ensuring inter-institutional cooperation, particularly among entities responsible for urban development.”

In 2015 and 2018, the Institute of Cultural Monuments benefited from international technical assistance for:

1. The development of Monitoring Indicators for the Historic Centers of Gjirokastra and Berat.
2. A regional training course on “Emergency Response for Cultural Heritage at Risk in the Historic Centers of Gjirokastra and Berat, World Heritage Sites,” implemented through the Regional Center for Conservation and Restoration of Southeast Europe in 2018.

In light of the ongoing World Heritage Committee decisions regarding the urgent need for an Integrated Management Plan (IMP) for the World Heritage Property “Historic Centers of Gjirokastra and Berat,” the National Institute of Cultural Heritage (IKTK) applied in 2017 for international assistance funding through UNESCO. International Assistance No. 2932, aimed at “Developing the Integrated Management Plan for the Historic Centers of Berat and Gjirokastra,” was approved by the World Heritage Centre (QTB) in 2019.

Between 2020 and 2022, in agreement with the World Heritage Centre, IKTK (National Institute of Cultural Heritage) finalized terms for assistance valued at USD 30,460.00, specifically focused on the IMP process, and signed the relevant contract in 2021. This paved the way for initiating consultations with stakeholders and collecting and processing preliminary data. In February 2023, an initial IMP draft was submitted to the World Heritage Centre and its advisory bodies, together with the relevant annexes. Based on this draft, ICOMOS and ICCROM prepared a series of recommendations, which will form part of the guiding information package for the renewed IMP process.

The 2024 World Heritage Committee Decision No. 46 COM 7B.2 reconfirmed the urgent need to continue the IMP drafting process started in 2022, leading to a preliminary final draft for review by the World Heritage Centre and its advisory bodies. Such a review is a prerequisite for further assistance.

6. ASSIGNMENT

6.1 Purpose and objectives

In line with the key issues identified later in this document, the primary goal of the process is to draft an Integrated Management Plan (IMP) for the Historic Centers of Gjirokastra and Berat, which together form a serial World Heritage property.

The process will be guided by the following key objectives:

- Safeguarding the Outstanding Universal Value, integrity, and authenticity of the Historic Centers of Berat and Gjirokastra.
- Developing the IMP based on a detailed analysis of the existing condition and cultural heritage values.
- Applying the 2011 Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape (HUL) approach.
- Establishing a governance system that defines roles, responsibilities, and coordination mechanisms among diverse stakeholders.
- Promoting sustainable tourism and diversified local economic development, ensuring that the main beneficiaries are local communities.
- Including risk management components for mitigating both natural and human-induced disasters, as well as for adapting to climate change.
- Aligning existing strategies related to potential development and/or risk management—such as urban development, tourism development, economic and social development, and threats associated with environmental degradation and climate change.
- Strengthening inter-institutional cooperation through stakeholder consultations, including local communities, civil society, and both local and international partners.
- Analyzing social and economic developments within the historic centers and the cities of Berat and Gjirokastra, and devising strategies to further harmonize these developments with the sites' Outstanding Universal Value.
- Identifying, based on an analysis of the current situation and community needs, priority interventions aimed at preserving the social fabric within the historic centers beyond purely tourism-focused functions.

6.2 Key Issues

Over the past few decades, social changes and developments have led the Historic Centers of Berat and Gjirokastra to face a series of challenges that the IMP must address comprehensively. These issues do not concern specific sites within the Historic Centers or individual processes in the existing management system. Rather, they require identifying practical ideas and avenues for improvement within the current framework. Moreover, recognizing these issues does not imply there are no ongoing efforts to manage or address them—it simply underscores the need for more work in this direction. Lastly, the order in which they are listed does not reflect their priority level. Among the most significant issues are:

1. The need for a general, well-defined management system that translates into effective planning and management instruments for the sustainable development of the Historic

Centers of Berat and Gjirokastra, focusing on the protection and promotion of their Outstanding Universal Value.

2. The need for a governance system that coordinates and fully synergizes the roles, responsibilities, mandates, and aspirations of all key stakeholders involved in managing the Historic Centers of Berat and Gjirokastra.
3. The need to harmonize sustainable urban and tourism development policies (and the interventions they generate in situ) with the priority of preserving and maintaining the Historic Centers' Outstanding Universal Value.
4. The need to balance the rapid growth of tourism in the Historic Centers of Berat and Gjirokastra by minimizing negative externalities on the living conditions of local communities who reside in these areas, and by diversifying development opportunities for these communities.
5. The need to document, analyze, and prioritize long-term solutions in response to demographic shifts and their impacts on the functioning of the Historic Centers, where local communities live and carry out their activities.
6. The need to create effective strategies and tools for dealing with natural or human-induced disasters and for adapting to climate change.
7. The need for coherent and proactive visitor management that does not compromise the Outstanding Universal Value but rather contributes to the Historic Centers' sustainability.
8. The need to conceptualize and manage transport and parking systems in an integrated and sustainable way, meeting the needs of both residents and visitors while preserving the historical and cultural integrity of the Historic Centers of Berat and Gjirokastra.
9. The need to transform the Historic Centers into dynamic platforms for education, research, and engagement with and through cultural heritage for the broadest possible audience.
10. The need to enhance stakeholder engagement, especially local communities, in planning, managing, and safeguarding the Outstanding Universal Value of the Historic Centers of Berat and Gjirokastra.
11. The need to assess the cumulative impact of all interventions carried out in recent years in relation to the sites' Outstanding Universal Value.

6.3 Final Product

Final Product

The final output of this process will be:

- 1) The Integrated Management Plan (IMP) for the Historic Centers of Berat and Gjirokastra.

Deliverables

Within the framework of drafting the IMP, the selected team will produce the following deliverables:

Deliverables	Content
1. Initial Report	<p>The initial report shall include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A preliminary assessment of the current situation, including the first draft that was previously submitted, along with comments from ICOMOS and ICCROM. • An overview of the challenges and risks, based on the key issues identified in [Section 6.2], including the existing management framework for the Historic Centers, any limitations or needs for improving the legal and regulatory framework, public perceptions of possible measures to be proposed, and other key issues for the IMP to address. • A clear stakeholder engagement strategy. Particular emphasis should be placed on mobilizing and involving actors on the ground in Berat and Gjirokastra, as well as others involved in the day-to-day management of the Historic Centers. • A work plan that clearly defines, among other elements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A detailed timeline for implementing the IMP process and preparing the corresponding deliverables. ○ A detailed plan for mobilizing and involving stakeholders. <p><i>Deliverable 1</i> will be considered complete upon confirmation by the relevant institutions (IKTK/MEKI).</p>
2. First Draft of the IMP	<p>The first complete draft, prepared in accordance with the specifications of this document, the applicable legal framework, and relevant standards.</p> <p>This document should include an analysis of the current state of the Historic Centers of Berat and Gjirokastra, with a special focus on identifying the cumulative impact of all interventions carried out since the last Management Plan, relative to the condition of conservation, integrity, and authenticity of these Historic Centers. This analysis should be detailed in a dedicated appendix to the IMP, in line with UNESCO's recommendations and requirements.</p> <p><i>Deliverable 2</i> will be considered complete upon confirmation by the relevant institutions (IKTK/MEKI).</p>
3. Preliminary Final Draft	<p>The preliminary final draft will serve as the basis for informing and consulting with the World Heritage Centre and its advisory bodies, with the aim of incorporating any potential recommendations into the final version.</p> <p><i>Deliverable 3</i> will be considered complete upon confirmation by the relevant institutions (IKTK/MEKI) and the World Heritage Center (QTB).</p>
4. Final Version	<p>The final version, submitted for approval at the relevant institutions.</p> <p><i>Deliverable 4</i> will be considered complete upon review and approval by the National Council for Tangible and Intangible Cultural Heritage (KKTKM) and the World Heritage Centre (QTB).</p>

6.4 Methodology

This process will be carried out by the selected team in collaboration with IKTK—which, in addition to coordination and monitoring, will ensure the necessary linkage with the UNESCO World Heritage Centre, in line with obligations arising from the World Heritage Convention and in accordance with Albanian cultural heritage legislation.

The methodology for drafting the plan will draw on local best practices, international best practices, and the recommendations of UNESCO's advisory bodies, including the 2011

Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape (HUL). It will be guided by the following principles:

- Inclusion of stakeholders and civil society
- Capacity-building at the local level and within local communities for managing and administering the property
- Integration of a risk management component into the IMP document
- Integration of the interpretation concept into the IMP document
- Defining collaboration mechanisms between institutions responsible for cultural heritage and local self-government units in both Historic Centers, to plan joint actions in line with the UNESCO “Serial World Heritage” status
- Ensuring the Action Plan includes measurable indicators that are clearly linked to the objectives and specific actions proposed by the IMP. The Monitoring Indicators developed under UNESCO’s 2015 International Assistance will serve as a valuable basis for updating the monitoring indicator list.

The IMP will be developed for a seven-year period (2025–2032), following a value-based approach in line with Law No. 27/2018 “On Cultural Heritage and Museums,” Articles 45 and 46.

The proposed methodology must reference international best practices for similar cultural heritage sites and comply with Council of Ministers Decision No. 169, dated February 20, 2020 (“On the scope, structure, content, preparation methodology, and public consultation procedures for the management plans of immovable cultural properties”).

When preparing the IMP, the following UNESCO documents will also be considered:

DECISIONS OF THE WORLD HERITAGE COMMITTEE

- 2024 - 46COM 7B.2 - Historic Centres of Berat and Gjirokastra (Albania) (C 569bis)
- 2023 - 45COM 7B.51 - Historic Centres of Berat and Gjirokastra (Albania) (C 569bis)
- 2021 - 44COM 7B.151 - Historic Centres of Berat and Gjirokastra (Albania) (C 569bis)
- 2019 - 43COM 7B.79 - Historic Centres of Berat and Gjirokastra (Albania) (C 569bis)
- 2018 - 42COM 13 - International Assistance
- 2017 - 41COM 7B.40 - Historic Centres of Berat and Gjirokastra (Albania) (C 569bis)
- 2015 - 39COM 7B.75 - Historic Centres of Berat and Gjirokastra (Albania) (C 569bis)
- 2013 - 37COM 7B.70 - Historic Centres of Berat and Gjirokastra (Albania) (C 569bis)

REPORTS FROM THE WHC AND ADVISORY BODY MISSIONS:

- 2022 - Report on the Joint WHC/ICOMOS/ICCROM Reactive Monitoring Mission to the World Heritage Property “HISTORIC CENTRES OF BERAT AND GJIROKASTRA” 13-17 December 2021
- 2016 - Report on the ICOMOS Advisory Mission to Historic Centres of Berat and Gjirokastra (Albania) (C 569bis), 27-29 April 2016
- 2012 - Report on the Reactive Monitoring Mission to the Historic Centres of Berat and Gjirokastra (Albania), 10-14 November 2012

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE ADVISORY BODIES ON THE INITIATED IMP PROCESS

Reports by ICOMOS and ICCROM, respectively dated March 15 and 16, 2023

The management plan structure includes, but is not limited to, the following chapters:

- a) Executive summary
- b) Introduction
- c) Description of the cultural property
- ç) Evaluation of the property’s values

- d) Other aspects related to the property
- dh) Vision, purpose, and objectives
- e) Management of the cultural property
- ë) Action Plan
- f) Implementation and monitoring
- g) Maps and annexes

6.5 Language

All IMP deliverables described in Section 6.3 will be prepared in two languages: Albanian and English. Translations will be carried out by licensed translators contracted by the consultant.

6.6 Duration of the IMP Process implementation

The entire process is scheduled to last **12 months** from the date the contract is signed, in order to allow sufficient time and resources for consultations and stakeholder feedback. Bidders may propose their own calendar for the process, but under no circumstances may they exceed the 12-month maximum timeframe.

The expected start date of the process is **December 2024**.

6.7 Minimum Required Qualifications

The following table lists the minimum qualifications necessary for forming the team of experts responsible for the IMP process.

No.	Position	Field of Expertise	Minimal Qualifications
1	Team Leader, Local or International	Cultural Heritage Management Expert	<p>Education:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advanced university degree (Master's or equivalent) in cultural heritage management, socioeconomic development, cultural landscape, urban development, or similar fields. <p>Qualifications:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 20 years of experience with similar sites in the Mediterranean region Proven experience leading at least 2 integrated management plans for comparable UNESCO sites Experience in cultural heritage management projects in Albania is considered an advantage.
2	Expert, Local or International	Governance Systems Expert	<p>Education:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advanced university degree (Master's or equivalent) in public administration, political science, social sciences, law, or related fields. <p>Qualifications:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10 years of experience in similar stakeholder mobilization, coordination, and decision-making processes.

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experience in cultural heritage management projects in Albania is considered an advantage.
3	Expert, Local or International	Risk Management Expert	<p>Education:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advanced university degree (Master's or equivalent) in risk management, disaster and emergency management, environmental sciences, or related fields. <p>Qualifications:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10 years of experience in analyzing, identifying, and proposing mitigation measures for similar processes. Experience in cultural heritage management projects in Albania is considered an advantage.
4	Local Expert	Local Heritage Expert	<p>Education:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advanced university degree (Master's or equivalent) in architecture, urban planning, engineering, historic/cultural landscapes, or related fields. <p>Qualifications:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10 years of experience related to local heritage, vernacular architecture, and urban planning in the context of historic centers. Proven local expertise on both Berat and Gjirokastra, demonstrated by publications and/or work experience. Possession of licenses P.A1, P.A2, P.A3, P.A5, P.A6, P.A7.
5	Expert, Local or International	Sustainable Tourism Expert	<p>Education:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advanced university degree (Master's or equivalent) in tourism development, cultural tourism, cultural heritage management, or similar fields. <p>Qualifications:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10 years of experience in similar processes for historic centers, nationally or internationally. Proven experience developing sustainable tourism strategies for at least one comparable UNESCO site.
6	Expert, Local or International	Demography Expert	<p>Education:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advanced university degree (Master's or equivalent) in demography, sociology, geography, social sciences, or related fields. <p>Qualifications:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10 years of experience with similar processes in historic centers, domestically or internationally. Proven track record in developing studies and strategies on demographic changes and their impacts.
7	Supporting Specialists	<p>Supporting Specialists</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community Engagement Specialist Architectural Conservation Specialists + 1 Archaeologist Environmental Specialist Mobility Specialis Economy Specialist Legal Specialist 	

Bidders may propose additional experts and/or supporting specialists with appropriate justification. IKTK will require assurances that the proposed experts/specialists will be effectively engaged in the process. Any change to the proposed experts/specialists shall only be made if it ensures at least the same level of expertise as the replaced individual and only with IKTK's prior written approval.

7 BIBLIOGRAPHY

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7. Riza, Emin; “Banesa e fortifikuar Gjirokastrite”; Monumentet 1971/1

8 ANNEXES

Annex 1	Zoning of the Berat Historic Center – Decision of the Council of Ministers No. 827, dated 28.12.2023
Annex 2	Zoning of the Gjirokastra Historic Center – Decision of the Council of Ministers No. 764, dated 20.12.2023
Annex 3	ICOMOS Recommendations on the IMP Process Undertaken by IKTK, 2020–22
Annex 4	ICCROM Recommendations on the IMP Process Undertaken by IKTK, 2020–22
Annex 5	List of Monuments, Gjirokastra
Annex 6	List of Monuments, Berat

Drafted: Joli Mitrojorgji

**List of interventions conducted by the Regional Directorates for Cultural Heritage
of Berat and Gjirokastra during 2024**

Gjirokastra

No.	Type of intervention / Property/Location	Results/Description
1	Maintenance and restoration of the “Sulo Llaqi” building, Manalat neighborhood, (Category I Monument), Gjirokastra.	The implementation of the intervention enables the preservation and rescue of the roof from further degradation and damage.
2	Maintenance and restoration of the Ciu"Margarita Haloci" building, Dunavat neighborhood, (Category I monument), Gjirokastra.	The implementation of the intervention enables the preservation and rescue of the roof from further degradation and damage.
3	Maintenance and restoration in the second block, part of the Neck of the Bazaar, (Category I Monument), Gjirokastra.	The implementation of the intervention, in collaboration with the Mufti Office, enables the preservation and rescue of the roof from further degradation and damage.
4	Maintenance and restoration of the “Suti” building, Palorto neighborhood, (Category II monument), Gjirokastra.	The implementation of the intervention enables the preservation and rescue of the roof from further degradation and damage.
5	Maintenance and cleaning at the “Naka” building, Palorto neighborhood, (Category II Monument)	Vegetation clearance at the "Naka" facility, after they it had damaged part of the roof and the windows at the back.
6	Maintenance and restoration of the 'Zekatët' building, Palorto neighborhood, (Category I monument), Gjirokastra.	The implementation of the intervention enables the preservation and protection of part of the ceiling from moisture, as well as the fixing of part of the building's windows.
7	Maintenance and restoration of the 'Harshova' gate, Varrosh neighborhood, (Category II monument), Gjirokastra.	The implementation of the intervention enables the preservation and rescue of the gate roof from further degradation and damage.
8	Maintenance and cleaning at the Gjirokastra Castle.	The implementation of the intervention enables the taking of conservation measures for the repair of the fence and the installation of signage at the Gjirokastra Castle.
9	Maintenance and restoration of the “Gudha” building, Meçite neighborhood, (Category II Monument), Gjirokastra.	The implementation of the intervention enables the preservation and rescue of the roof structure from further degradation and damage.
10	Maintenance and restoration of the "Skënduli" building, Palorto neighborhood, (Category I Monument), Gjirokastra.	Carrying out the intervention, in collaboration with the property owner, enables the preservation and rescue of the roof's shingles from further degradation and damage.
11	Maintenance works for the “A. Meleqi” building, Old Bazaar neighborhood, (Category II Monument), Gjirokastra.	The implementation of the intervention enables the preservation and rescue of the roof from further degradation and damage.

12	Maintenance works for the "Mezini" building, Old Bazaar neighborhood, (Category II Monument), Gjirokastra.	The implementation of the intervention enables the preservation and rescue of the roof structure from further degradation and damage.
13	Maintenance works for the "Kuci" building, Old Bazaar neighborhood, (Category II Monument), Gjirokastra.	The implementation of the intervention enables the preservation and rescue of the roof ridge in the southern part from further degradation and damage.
14	Maintenance works at the "Kurti" Gate, Cfake neighborhood, (Category I Monument), Gjirokastra.	The implementation of the intervention enables the preservation and rescue of the gate from further degradation and damage.
15	Maintenance works at the Neck of the Bazaar, Block no. 4, Gjirokastra.	The implementation of the intervention enables the preservation and rescue of the roof from further degradation and damage and the arrangement of the landscape for the beginning of the tourist season.
16	Maintenance works for the "Zekatet" building, Palorto neighborhood, (Category I Monument), Gjirokastra.	The implementation of the intervention enables the preservation and rescue of the roof from further degradation and damage.
17	Preparatory works for the fencing of Gjirokastra Castle	Railings have been prepared to surround the interior of the Castle, to ensure the safety of visitors.
18	Setting up the fencing of the Castle, Gjirokastra	Railings have been installed inside the Castle to increase visitor safety.
19	Preparation and installation of the external gate of the "Orphanage" building, Palorto neighborhood, (Category II Monument), Gjirokastra.	An external gate has been installed in the premises of the orphanage, Gjirokastra, to ensure the safety of the children.
20	Vegetation clearance at Gjirokastra Castle.	Clearing vegetation in the inner courtyards of the Castle.
21	Restoration of the "CALI" Gate in the Palorto neighborhood.	The gate and its elements have been restored, as it was on the verge of destruction.
22	Restoration of the roof of the "Edip Aliko" building in the Hazmurat neighborhood.	The restoration of the spreth saves the roof and the veranda from degradation.
23	Restoration of the roof of the "Puto-Galaxhi-Drrasa" building.	The restoration of the building's roof saves the building from further degradation.
24	Restoration of the gate of the "Karagjozi" building in the Dunavat neighborhood.	Restoration of the door and its elements, after they were damaged by moisture.
25	Restoration of the walls and tiles of the rainwater channels in Gjirokastra Castle	Repair and restoration of several walls, as well as the tiles covering the rainwater drainage in Gjirokastra Castle, damaged by vehicles and visitors.
26	Restoration of the gate of the "Denisa Pesha" building in the Palorto neighborhood.	Intervention in the elements and structure of the gate, to save it from further damage and its arrangement.
27	Restoration intervention of the "Alize Kaso" building, "Palorto" neighborhood (Cultural Monument Category II).	During this month, Drtk Gjirokastra intervened to restore part of the roof of the "Kaso", which was in danger of collapsing. The work will continue into July.

28	Restoration intervention in the “Drasa” building, “Mecite” neighborhood (Cultural Monument Category II).	During this month, Drtk Gjirakastra carried out restoration work on the facade of the "Drasa" in collaboration with the owner who installed the materials.
29	Restoration work was carried out on the "Jupi" building in the "Mecite" neighborhood (Cultural Monument Category II (second)).	During this month, Drtk Gjirakastra carried out restoration interventions on the facade of the "Jupi", which had problems with the facade in its front part. This intervention was carried out in collaboration with the owner who installed the materials.
30	Restoration intervention in the “Kasi” building, “Palorto” neighborhood (Cultural Monument Category II (second)).	During this month, Drtk Gjirakastra carried out restoration work on the roof of "Kasi" in collaboration with the owner who installed the materials.
31	Restoration intervention at the gate of the “Muzina” building, “Palorto” neighborhood (Cultural Monument category II (second)).	During this month, Drtk Gjirakastra has carried out restoration interventions on the roof of the “Muzina” gate, which had structural damage. This intervention was carried out in collaboration with the owner, who provided the necessary materials.
32	Restoration intervention at the “Ballo” gate, “Palorto” neighborhood (Cultural Monument Category II).	During this week, Drtk Gjirakastra carried out restoration interventions on the door leaves of the "Ballo" building, which were rotten and were replaced with new ones. This intervention was carried out in collaboration with the owner, who placed some of the materials.
33	Restoration work was carried out on the “Kocollari” gate in the “Mecite” neighborhood (Cultural Monument Category II).	During this month, Drtk Gjirakastra has begun work on restoration interventions on the external gate of the "Kocollari" building, which has problems with the roof and the gate leaves, which will be restored.
34	Restoration work was carried out on the "Angonatët" building in the "Partizani" neighborhood (Cultural Monument Category I)	During this month, Drtk Gjirakastra has begun work on restoration interventions on the roof of the "Angonatë" building in the south-eastern part, the damage of which endangers passers-by but also spoils the image of the complex.
35	Intervention for signage and railings Kala.	During this month, Drtk Gjirakastra has installed wooden stairs in the Castle premises as well as wooden railings in various areas of the Castle.
36	Restoration intervention in the "Qirjako Nikica" building, "Dunavat" neighborhood (Cultural Monument category I).	During the month, the restoration of the roof trusses of this building was carried out in collaboration with the owner.
37	Restoration intervention of the "Officers' Palace" building, "Palorto" neighborhood.	During the month, work was carried out to restore the roof and eaves of this building in collaboration with the owners.
38	Restoration intervention at the “Alize Kaso” building, “Palorto” neighborhood (Cultural monument Category II).	Completed.
39	Restoration intervention of the gate of the “Afrim Kaso” building, “Dunavat” neighborhood (Cultural Monument Category II (second)).	During the month, restoration work was carried out on the roof of the gate of this building, which had a problem with the roof tiles, which were restored. (This work was carried out in collaboration with the owner).

40	Restoration work was carried out on the “Kocollari” gate in the “Mecite” neighborhood (Cultural Monument Category II (second)).	Completed.
41	Restoration intervention at the gate of the “Bazo” building, “Palorto” neighborhood (Cultural Monument Category I (first)).	During the month, an intervention was carried out on the outer gate of this building, which was restored while preserving its elements.
42	Restoration intervention at the “Ballo” gate, “Palorto” neighborhood (Cultural Monument Category II (second)).	complete
43	Restoration work was carried out on the "Angonatët" building building in the "Partizani" neighborhood (Cultural Monument Category I (first)).	complete
44	Castle maintenance works.	During the month, renovation and maintenance works were carried out at the Gjirokastra Castle.
45	Restoration intervention "Zoica" building, Palorto neighborhood (Cultural Monument Category II (second))	During the month, work was carried out to restore the roof of this building, which had problems with the sliding of the stone slab and the breakage of the rafters. This intervention was carried out in collaboration with the owner.
46	Restoration intervention "Bicuni" building, Varosh neighborhood (Cultural Monument Category II (second))	During the month, work was carried out to restore part of the roof and siding of this damaged building. -This intervention was carried out in collaboration with the owner.
47	Restoration intervention "Sinani" building, Old Market neighborhood (Cultural Monument Category II (second))	During the month, work was carried out to restore the roof of this building, which had damage in various parts. -This intervention was carried out in collaboration with the owner.
48	Restoration intervention, gate of the “Ladi Shehu” building, Manalat neighborhood (Cultural Monument Category II (second))	During the month, work was carried out to restore the roof of the Shehu Gate, which had a stability problem and was completely restored. -This intervention was carried out in collaboration with the owner.
49	Restoration and maintenance interventions at Gjirokastra Castle.	
50	Construction of waste bins in the Gjirokastra Castle, Antigone and Libohova Castle.	
51	Maintenance intervention at the “Xhezo” building in the Palorto neighborhood	During the month, work was carried out on the roof of the Xhezo building building (Cultural Monument Category I (first)), which had problems in its western part such as broken beams and columns.
52	(Cultural Monument Category I (first))	This intervention was carried out in collaboration with the owner
53	Maintenance work was carried out at the "Arapi" building in the Palorto neighborhood.	During the month, work was carried out to restore the front roof of this building, which was in danger of collapsing as a result of the breakage of the beam and rafters.

54	Restoration intervention in the "Zekatët" building, Palorto neighborhood (Cultural Monument Category I (first))	During the month, this building was entered to fix points that could damage the roof.
55	Maintenance intervention of the "Kadare" building, Palorto neighborhood (Cultural Monument Category I (first))	The roof of this building was breached to seize the points.
56	Maintenance intervention of the "Ciu" building building, Dunavat neighborhood (Cultural Monument Category I (first)).	This building was entered to remove items that were further damaging the building.
57	Restoration intervention on the roof of the "Sami Kotro" building, Varosh neighborhood, Historical Center	Interventions were made during the month to restore part of the roof of this building, which posed a risk to passers-by as it was located in a populated area near the Museum Center and near the "Feim Ibrahim" Art School.
58	Maintenance intervention at the Martin Cici building, Palorto neighborhood.	During the month, work was carried out on the roof of this building, which had shown problems with its stability.
59	Restoration intervention at the gate of the "Margariti" building, Palorto neighborhood.	Interventions have begun to restore the Margariti Gate, preserving its authentic elements.
60	Emergency intervention at the "Duka" building in the Varosh neighborhood.	Removal of a hazard on the roof of this building, which posed a risk to passersby but also to the residents of the building themselves.
61	Emergency intervention at the "Andoni" building, January 11 neighborhood.	The de-risking of the Andoni building was inadvertently endangering passersby and residents of the building block next to it.
62	Maintenance interventions at the "Gjirokastra Castle" and the "Antigone Archaeological Park".	The arrangement of the surrounding railings in the Castle has been completed, as well as the repair of the bins in the Archaeological Park.
63	Restoration intervention "Cico" building, Hazmurat neighborhood	It is an intervention to occupy the points and avoid the degradation of the southwestern part of the building.
64	Restoration intervention "Cipi" building, Palorto neighborhood	Restoration intervention on the roof of the Cipie building, which had a problem with part of the roof. The intervention was carried out with its own materials.
65	Restoration intervention at the gate of the "Margariti" building, Palorto neighborhood.	Complete
66	Restoration intervention on the roof of the "Jace Hasko" building in the Dunavat neighborhood.	Drtk Gjirokastra intervened during the month to restore part of the Hasko building, which had a problem with a part of the roof that was leaking and risking further degradation. The intervention was carried out with its own materials.
67	De-risking of the "Duka" building in the Palorto neighborhood.	Drtk Gjirokastra has intervened to remove the danger in the Duka building as a result of the rock slide.
68	Restoration work was carried out on the "Tomor Hoxha" building in the "Old Bazar" neighborhood.	Drtk Gjirokastra has begun work on restoring the roof of this building, which had a problem in part of it.

69	Restoration intervention at the gate of the "Këndella" building in the "Partizani" neighborhood.	Work has begun on the restoration of the exterior gate of this building, which had a problem with its durability.
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Berat

1. Restoration of the Icon: "Christ the High Priest on the Throne" by Gjergj Joan Çetiri
2. Restoration of the Icon: "Saint George" from the Church of the "Nativity of Saint Mary," Vokopolë, and the Icon "Saint George and Saint Demetrius on the Throne" from the Church of "Prophet Elijah," Berat
3. Maintenance Intervention on the Facade of Mr. Koçi Kondakçiu's Residence, Kala Neighborhood, Berat
4. Maintenance in the Kala Neighborhood near the steps leading to the Church of Saint Trinity
Maintenance in the Kala Neighborhood: cleaning of vegetation near the Walls and Towers of the Castle
5. Maintenance of the roof of the bell tower at the Church of the "Dormition of Saint Mary," currently the Iconographic Museum "Onufri," including the windows
6. Cleaning vegetation in the streets of the Kala Neighborhood and nearby monument territories, especially the square near the water cistern
7. Disinfection of artworks in the restoration laboratory of the Regional Directorate of Cultural Heritage, Berat
8. Emergency intervention to repair the roof of the Church of Saint Mary, Sinjë
9. Restorative Intervention on the Perimeter Wall near the Medieval Center (behind the Halveti Tekke)
10. Vegetation Cleaning in the streets of the Kala and Goricë Neighborhoods as well as nearby monument territories
11. emergency intervention on a retaining wall protecting against loose rocks in the Mangalem Neighborhood
12. Restoration of two icons: "Christ" and "Saint Mary" by the Çetiri Brothers
13. restorative intervention on the house of mr. Ëngjell Koço, Kala Neighborhood, Berat (Roof and Facade)
14. Maintenance intervention on the roof of the Mufti Offices - Berat, a Second Category Cultural Monument (in Collaboration with the Mufti)
15. Restorative intervention in the Church of Saint Nicholas, Kala

ANNEX 3

Overview of the Project: “*Enhancing Touristic Attractivity of Berat Castle by Improving Touristic Accessibility*” (prepared by: JV "Civil Cons" Sh.Pk & "Transport Highway Consulting" sh.pk f or the Municipality of Berat)

Berat (also called the city of one above one windows) is a city with about 65,000 inhabitants and one of the two municipalities of the Berat District that is part of the Berat District. The city of Berat was originally built as a fortress, on a rocky hill with a height of 187m above sea level, on the right side of the Osum river, before it emerges in the field of Myzeqes, the largest in Albania. The district of Berat lies in the Central Mountain Province and partly in the Southwestern Lowlands of Albania, in the coordinates: latitude: North 40 degrees 52'24"; South 40 degrees 29'30" (city 40 degrees 41'06"); longitude: East 20 degrees 10'51"; West 19 degrees 44'30" (city 19 degrees 56'40"). The district of Berat lies mainly in a territory with mountainous and hilly relief, with an average height above sea level of 455m (the city is 58m). The plains lie on the north-western side of the district, in the Osum valley, until it joins the Myzeqe plain. In the natural environment of Berat, the following are distinguished: the plain and hilly area of Berat and Kuçova, the mountain of Tomorri (East, 2417m) and that of Shpirag (West, 1218m), as well as the valley of Osum and Tomorica.

"Shkembî" street is a street that connects Muzakë Topia street with Antipatrea street. This road axis passes through the Western side of the Berat castle and offers very fast access to the castle, starting from the intersection of the "Antipatrea" road with the "Stavër Naco" road. The existing infrastructure of this road axis is presented as follows: In a length of 0+370 ml, this road is paved with cobblestones, which have many damages. From progressive 0+370 m to progressive 0+780 the road is unpaved and in natural condition. The route appears open. From the beginning of this axis, the connection with the "Antipatrea" road, to the progressive 0+780 on both sides of the road there are surrounding walls, surrounding fences and residential buildings. The width in this length varies from 4 to 5 m. From the progressive 0+780 to the progressive 1+258, the connection with Muzakë Topia street, the road axis appears unopened and can only be accessed by pedestrians. The elevations of this road axis vary from 59 m to 180 m above sea level.

Construction of "Shkembî Road" offers the most cost/effective solution for creating a quick and safe access to Berat Castle for pedestrian and traffic users. According to the design, the project will include:

- (Re)construction of the road infrastructure (sub-layers)
- (Re)construction of road layers.
- Road drainage
- Construction of retaining walls
- Installation of a new sewerage network system (KUB)
- Electrical works for street lighting
- Installation of vertical traffic signs
- Engineering protective measures, where necessary
- Other minor road ancillary works

The construction of the body of the road with cobblestones (20 cm thick layer) is foreseen for the total length of the project road (1.258km). A layer of gravel with a thickness of 20 cm, compressed and rolled will be placed below the cobblestone layer. From progressive 0+000 to progressive 0+670 the width of the road will be kept like it is at the present moment with the purpose to avoid any social issues related to eventual demolitions and/or expropriations, which are not necessary and required for the touristic purposes of the rehabilitated “Skembî road”. From progressive 0+670 to progressive 1+258 the road carriageway will be composed of two lanes (each of them 2.75m wide), accompanied by stone gutters. Also, the construction of a sidewalk (1.5m wide) is foreseen in those sections which would allow it, realized with cobblestones with an average thickness of $t=15$ cm, placed on a layer of rolled gravel with a thickness of $t=10$ cm. The road body will be secured from landslides with the construction of retaining walls on both the sides of the road, at those positions identified in the detailed design.

River banks protection works along the Osum River. The design offers the most cost/effective solution for stopping the progressive erosion of the riverbanks close to "Stavër Naco" road and of a section of "Antipatrea" road. The project will include:

- Construction of a gabion wall for river protection
- Construction of rip-rap system in front of the gabion wall
- Engineering protective measures, wherever necessary
- Other minor road ancillary works