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# PERICLES Heritage: Workshop - demodevelopment in Marsaxlokk, Malta

Date of workshops: 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> of March, 2020  
Place of workshop: Marsaxlokk, Malta

## Organisers and authors:

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Jordi Vegas Macias (Wageningen University and Research).

**Report:** April 2020

**NOTE:** Due to current COVID-19 conditions, there plans outlined in this report will have to be adapted. Dates mentioned in this report may therefore change. We are hoping that the Fish Festival in September will not be cancelled and the launch of the digital tools can still be launched and ready for the summer season. In this regard, work will continue in a virtual manner until further notice, to ensure the completion of demos as much as possible.



This report summarizes the discussions of the workshops that took place on the 4th and 5th of March, in Marsaxlokk. The so-called demos for the PERICLES project were discussed amongst a wide variety of interested participants. These demos are

- 1) *Stories of the waterfront: Digitally guided tours in and around Marsaxlokk Bary;*
- 2) *Fishing for recipes. Connecting, seafood, fisheries and culinary practices.*

The different workshops were attended by the following participants:

NAME	ORGANISATION
Kurt Mifsud	Mediterranean Culinary Academy
Stephen la Rosa	Mediterranean Culinary Academy
Gilbert Calleja	University of Westminster
Stephanie Cumbo	University of Malta
Owen Zammit	Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture
Joseph Gravina	Marsaxlokk Heritage
Daniel Zerafa	Marsaxlokk Local Council
Marthese Degrabiele	Marsaxlokk local boat tours
Paulino Schembri	University of Lancashire
George Cassar	University of Malta
Karsten Xuareb	University of Malta
Kurt Farrugia	Superintendence of Cultural Heritage
Daryl Ebejer	Festivals Malta
Moira Pisani	Malta Tourism Authority

This report will provide a summary of each of the two demos, capture the activities and ideas that were developed, agreed upon and planned.

### ***DEMO: Stories of the Waterfront. Digitally guided tours in and around Marsaxlokk Bay***

On the 4<sup>th</sup> of March, fourteen stakeholders met together with Jordi Vegas (main organiser) and Dr Alicia Said (moderator) to develop and discuss ideas around demo M.2. The digital tool and platform izi.TRAVEL was presented, followed by a hands-on workshop to get familiar with the technology. Stakeholders evaluated and discussed the potential uses and possibilities of the tool for creating audio guides and digital tours in and around Marsaxlokk. There was a general positive acceptance and different participants took initiative in deciding to develop audio guides, depending on their background and the contribution that they can give.

The stakeholder group agreed on developing three ideas for digital itineraries within the coming months that can be officially launched and ready-to-use in summer. These are:

1) **Historical digital tour around the peninsula.** The audio guide tour aims to highlight the built-heritage of the coast, at the same time offering more options for visitors for Marsaxlokk to explore beyond the waterfront area. This is aimed to offer an audio guide and digitalize paths in a rural coastal area but also to influence visitor's flows from crowded centers to less-known areas. These can be either done entirely on foot, or combined with local boat experiences, as defined in point 3. For this particular tour, Daniel Zerafa from the local council and Joseph Gravina have already agreed on working with it.



2) **Fishers' stories of the waterfront.** This audio guide aims to give visibility to the rich and lively cultural tangible and intangible heritage of the fishing village of Marsaxlokk. Its particular character linked to the sea is not yet fully unfold for visitors and therefore, having digital audio guides can help to make it more visible. When visitors go to Marsaxlokk to experience the vibrant 'fishing traditions' they take photos of the different fishing gears, without getting any information about, for example, what type of fish is targeted with the gear, or what the different fishing vessels are used for. The fishers that speak English or Italian at times try to explain to interested tourists, however language literacy is an issue, and such audio guides would be invaluable for visitors to experience a truly authentic and informed tour of fishing traditions in Marsaxlokk. Fishing activities and different fishing gears that can be included in the story, for instance:

- Traditional boats
- Fishing stories (big catches, sad day)
- Traditional Fish dishes
- Ghajn tal –Hasselin
- Historical sites

For this particular audio guide, Stephanie Cumbo and Marthese Degabriele will be developing content and creating items and a tour that can be implemented via izi.TRAVEL. We also acknowledge that Joseph Gravina can also contribute in this particular audio guide.

3) **Audio guides in a local boat tour experience.** A last proposal was discussed to create an audio guide that could be combined in the newly developed boat tours that visitors can take in Marsaxlokk. The goal behind is to provided added value to local initiatives while providing a distinct tour from the sea that could either show and present differently the seascape and the different MCH elements as well as potential underwater and water heritage elements that can be only visible via these tours. This idea is also a way of incentivizing the growth of local boat tours as diversification niches for full-time or part-time fishers during low fishing seasons. Moreover, local boat tour experiences can include the witnessing of fishing activities happening out at sea (within the 3 nautical mile zone of the coast). In this occasion, Marthese Degabriele and Stephanie Cumbo will be organizing and developing this audio guide for the boat tour experiences.

At this particular moment, these audio guide proposals are under development with some assistance from the Case region coordinator, if needed. They are part of the agreement of the workshops and a way forward to develop digital audio guides in Marsaxlokk. This is not exclusive, and any other participant can also propose ideas for these audio guides to be developed or for other tours / audio guides. It is possible as well to create items which don't need to be part of an itinerary but still displayed via digital means.

***DEMO: Fishing for recipes. Connecting, seafood, fisheries and culinary practices.***

On the 5<sup>th</sup> of March, twelve stakeholders met together with Jordi Vegas (main organiser) and Dr Alicia Said (moderator) to develop and discuss ideas around demo M.1. Presentations and links based on the previous workshop in November were introduced, followed by a brainstorm and discussion session to look and develop different actions that can be introduced in the Fish Festival. A second festival – San Girgor -, taking place annually on the first Wednesday after Easter (March or April), was suggested as another opportunity to include more actions. However, due to the current circumstances of the COVID-19, all the actions for April had to be cancelled since the event is no longer taking place. Nonetheless, potential April plans that can fit in the Fish Fest which is annually organized by the Government of Malta can still be undertaken (e.g. lottery of underutilized fish species).

The Fish Festival in September is still not cancelled. For the time being, the team will continue planning this event virtually in line with what was discussed during the initial plan during the meeting in March.



The following initiatives that were discussed are:

1) **Fishing for Recipes:** Initiate a campaign at local level to collect fish recipes through the local council of Marsaxlokk. Once the fish festival arrives, these recipes, and photos of people preparing them (optional) will be displayed (either on paper or digitally via a large screen). The initiative aims to engage and encourage community participation, at the same time to give visibility to the traditional fish recipes. This event will be coordinated by the local council, and the MCA.

2) **Food demonstration.** Two local fishers' wives will be performing a show cooking during the festival. They will prepare two traditional maritime recipes with underutilized species. Stephanie Cumbo and Marthese Degrabiele, who will contact the fishers' wives. Festivals Malta offered to provide a stage where they can perform. Kitchen equipment has been offered by Paulino Schembri and can be picked up by the local council with the van. Although this activity is programmed for San Gircor in April, possibilities to see if it can be done in September or in 2021 can be explored.

3) **Follow the fish.** This actions aims to recreate a hands-on activity within the festival which consists of three stages, where visitors can first buy the local and fresh fish straight from the fish mongers; secondly bring it to a stand where professional chefs will interact and have a conversation in a short workshop to learn how to clean and prepare the fish (MCA); and finally take the fish to a last stand where it will be cooked by community volunteers, against a small donation (3 euro) for the parish feast. The whole operation aims to create an interactive and educational activity to entertain visitors of the festival, and bring the community together in a celebration of fish as food.

4) **Traditional weaving:** Transforming discarded fishing gear into other types of products such as hammocks or bags which can be sold during the fish fest. This links to the national strategy of waste reduction at sea, and can entice the participation of the Ministry of Environment, which is not yet involved in the project. There are not yet any participants involved in this particular activity, but it can be discussed and explored since it should not require big logistics and the impacts and messages can be beneficial for the image of fishing community and the environment.

5) **Boat tours:** The boat tours can be included in the event at a discounted price for the local visitors who would also be interested in experiencing the heritage of Marsaxlokk from the sea. Marthese Degabriele suggested offering this activity, as long as there is a common agreement amongst boat tour operators in Marsaxlokk.

## Next steps

### 1) Plans for development of demo for the audio guide tours

For the coming months, we will still developing via online the izi.TRAVEL ideas to create digital audio guides and tours as proposed above. It is possible to continue since it is not affected by the current circumstances of the COVID-19. The idea is the to have the content and the design ready on the izi.TRAVEL platform and have them ready to be launched once the mobility and summer season is back to a certain normality.

### 2) Webinar in June

As mentioned during the workshops in March, the idea was to have a follow-up meeting in June. As it won't be possible due to the COVID-19, the idea will be then to set up a webinar with all the participants to join an online follow-up and discussions for both demos. The webinar will be then programmed in June (or before if requested by the participants) as a substitute of the physical meeting in June. More details about the webinar to come.



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## **Additional information: Izi.TRAVEL- relevant links**

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