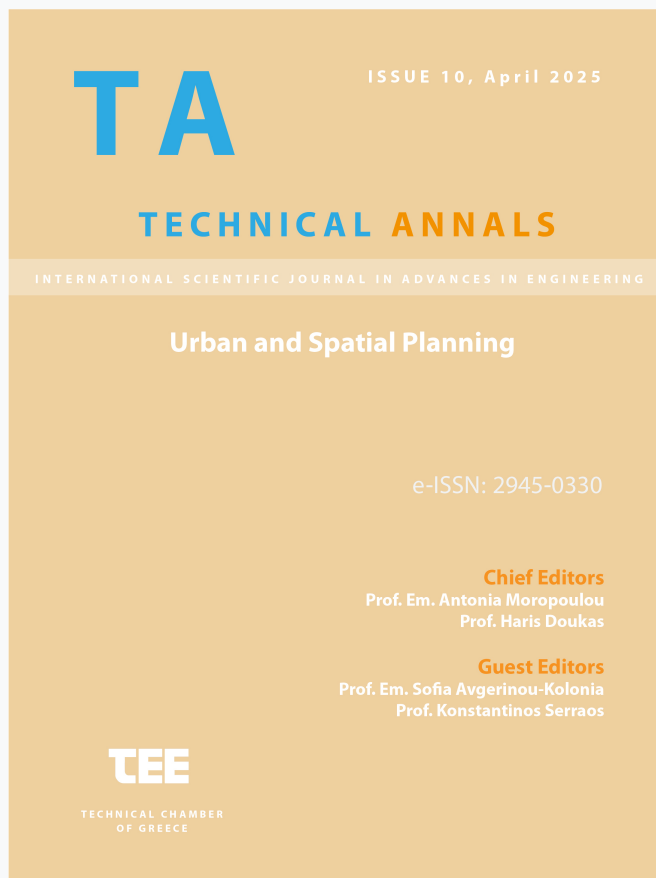


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### Are Conservation Principles being implemented in Historic cities or not?

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# Are Conservation Principles being implemented in Historic cities or not?

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**Abstract:** This paper recommends eleven criteria regarding the conservation of urban heritage, through a review of UNESCO and ICOMOS doctrinal texts for the protection of historic cities. When comparing these conservation principles with the current conditions of many historic cities, it seems that many of them have been already adopted in a haphazard manner. Therefore, a holistic reporting approach is required to demonstrate how efficiently Historic Urban Landscape is being preserved. This approach integrates also the heritage conservation into the sustainable urban development, preserving not only the quality of the built environment but also traditional productive resources and the daily lives of local residents. Furthermore, through a survey of one of the oldest cities in Europe, Argos in the Peloponnese has been chosen as a case study to implement a comprehensive conservation status report based on the aforementioned criteria. Listed monuments, archaeological sites, historic districts, vernacular architecture, and other components of both intangible and tangible urban heritage have been assessed and organized within this framework. Therefore, by identifying valuable characteristics of the city alongside signs of vulnerability, stakeholders from public services, civil society, and the private sector can be informed and involved in the policy-making process.

**Keywords:** Urban Heritage, Heritage Conservation, Spatial Planning, Historic Cities

## 1 Introduction

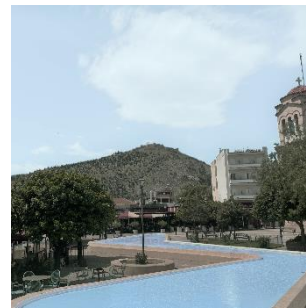
Since 1962, ICOMOS Charters and UNESCO Conventions and Recommendations have defined the standards for cultural heritage conservation. More specifically, in 2011 both the Valetta Principles [10] and the Historic Urban Landscape (HUL) Recommendation [9] proposed innovative methods to protect the historic areas. From the monument as a landmark inside the urban tissue to the historic quarter in strictly recognised boundaries, the landscape approach introduced the need for urban heritage conservation. Except of the monumental structures, urban heritage [9] consists of the non-exceptional building stock in a relevant abundance, the open spaces as well as the infrastructures and activities that configure the distinct cityscape.

Although governmental institutions have already implemented many conservation policies for the historic cities, most of them are monument-oriented or focused on regeneration projects of city-centers. On the other hand, an effective policy making doesn't pay attention only to the rehabilitation of built environment, but also needs to convert threats and challenges of urban heritage into opportunities for the sustainable development. The impact of climate change coupled with natural disasters, the geopolitical instability, the rapid increase of urban population, globalization with widely accepted urban development standards and mass tourism should be mitigated [11].

Apart from the environmental and aesthetic deterioration, social and spatial fragmentation is emerging in historic cities. In particular, short-term lease not only forces property owners to renovate the buildings without taking into consideration the architectural attributes but also chase away the traditional urban population, due to the overpriced rental fees. Moreover, because of the housing relocation to the suburbs, historic quarters are transformed into ghettos for tourists or monofunctional areas, dedicated to leisure time activities or administrative services. Although, this short-run development model evolved in megacities due to the gentrification, worldwide, [11] many irreversible impacts such as the loss of long-standing activities or the destruction of historic buildings, followed.



**Fig. 1.** Old public garden behind the church of Saint Peter, Argos (Argolikos Archival Library of History & Culture)



**Fig. 2.** New structures in the position of the public garden after regeneration project in 2014 (Archive of I. Kartsonakis)

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**Fig. 3.** (Left-up) Square of Saint Peter in early 20<sup>th</sup> century, Argos (Argolikos Archival Library of History & Culture) **Fig. 4.** (Right-up) Square of Saint Peter in April 2024 (Archive of I. Kartsonakis) **Fig. 5.** (Left-down) Old mansion behind the public garden, Argos (Argolikos Archival Library of History & Culture) **Fig. 6.** (Right-down) New four-storey building (Archive of I. Kartsonakis)

However, preserved historic areas may offer alternative development chances, based on the cultural tourism or traditional manufactures, supporting further the local communities. For instance, old pictures of historic buildings and outdoor public spaces in Argos (Fig.1-6), demonstrate the unquestionable aesthetic values, the eco-friendly design based on local resources and techniques, as well as the vivid social practices. On the contrary, the contemporary manmade structures have altered gradually these values. When public services or the civil society have not the jurisdiction or the initiative accordingly to protect them, the cityscape remains under an undetected danger.

Therefore, this research proposes an assessment methodology on how conservation principles are being implemented in many historic cities by different means at national or subnational level. This framework could present the weaknesses or the benefits of the current heritage conservation policies regarding their footprint on the socio-economic, built and natural environment.

## 2 Review of UNESCO & ICOMOS doctrinal texts

The UNESCO and ICOMOS doctrinal documents may join three main groups; definitions and principles, measures and procedures, education and information (Fig.7).



**Fig. 7.** Diagram with the structure of the UNESCO & ICOMOS doctrinal documents, which are reviewed in order to propose an Assessment Methodology on whether conservation principles are implemented in historic cities (Archive of I. Kartsonakis)

Focused only on the conservation principles, this research presents eleven criteria (Fig.8a) that refer to the urban planning, the urban design, the urban fabric as well as the socioeconomic structure of historic cities (Fig.8b). At the level of urban planning, the applicable legislation is assessed for the recognised historic district, its buffer zone, the traditional land-uses patterns as well as the traffic control. Similarly, at the level of urban design, the balance between hard and soft landscaping, the harmonious integration of urban infrastructure as well as the traditional mobility model should be reviewed. Also, at the level of the buildings, maintenance and modern interventions in

both historic and non-exceptional premises are assessed. This evaluation is not only limited to the architectural features of the premises. However, it is focused on the integration of appropriate functions, by preserving the relationships within the urban context and with other sections of the city. These relationships are configurated by the socioeconomic structure of historic cities. Therefore, apart from the material evidences, through the identification of the local intangible heritage as well as the cultural diversity, these relationships could be proved further.

Categories	Criteria
Urban Planning	<b>Criterion 1</b>   Conservation of Historic District
	<b>Criterion 2</b>   Designation of Buffer Zone
	<b>Criterion 3</b>   Preservation of Traditional Land-uses patterns
Urban Design	<b>Criterion 4</b>   Balance in Soft and Hard Landscaping
	<b>Criterion 5</b>   Appropriate Urban Mobility Model
	<b>Criterion 6</b>   Harmonized Urban Design
Urban Fabric	<b>Criterion 7</b>   Conservation of Architectural Heritage
	<b>Criterion 8</b>   Harmonious Integration of Contemporary Architecture
	<b>Criterion 9</b>   Appropriate New Function in Historic Premises
Socioeconomic Structure	<b>Criterion 10</b>   Preservation of Intangible Heritage
	<b>Criterion 11</b>   Identification of Cultural Diversity

**Fig. 8a.** List of eleven criteria for this assessment methodology, Archive of I. Kartsonakis



**Fig. 8b.** Four categories of the recommended assessment methodology; urban planning, urban design, urban fabric, socioeconomic structure, with the separate criteria: Archive of I. Kartsonakis (1) View of historic area in Cordoba, Spain, August 2024, (2) Urban landscape of Barcelona, Spain, November 2019, (3) Opera, Vienna, Austria 2022, (4) View of a tree line, Rome, Italy 2024, (5) Tram station in front of the Opera, Bordeaux, France 2023, (6) Local pavement materials in public space, Taormina, Italy, August 2023, (7) Sample of vernacular architecture, Nuremberg, Germany 2020, (8) Contemporary building inside the historic quarter, Samos, Greece 2024 (9) Retail store as a new function of an old Church, Saint Emilion, France, 2023, (10) Islamic architecture, Palermo, Italy 2022, (11- social practices) Street food market, Rome, Italy 2024 (11 – local crafts) Pottery craft, Skiros, Greece 2023.

## 2.1 Urban planning

### Criterion 1 | Conservation of Historic District

In the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, following WWI and II as well as under the pretext of expansion or modernization, irrational demolition and dispensable reconstruction works caused irreversible damages to historic cities. As a result, governmental services identified the protected areas within the old urban tissue, due to their distinct patterns. This urban morphology can be distinguished by lots, the street grid and the relationship between buildings and open spaces, with or without vegetation [6]. Except of the geometrical features, at the scale of the historic areas, perspectives, views, focal points and visual corridors need to be preserved. In several cases, historic districts also include

many listed buildings and monuments, which many times are combined with chronic land-tenure problems [10]. Therefore, large-scale conservation, restoration and rehabilitation projects should be implemented, albeit their difficulty. Apart from these corrective actions, in protected areas a systematic interconnection between safeguarding and planning at all levels is required [5]. During private or public works, this procedure can prevent the reorganization of the lots as well as the change of volume, which could be harmful to the harmony of the whole [10].

#### **Criterion 2 | Designation of Buffer Zone**

Since protected historic areas are inseparable from their setting, a buffer zone as a peripheral belt needs to be incorporated into the over-all town planning [4]. This natural or man-made setting influences the static or dynamic way that the historic areas are perceived [5]. However, a growing universality of construction techniques and architectural forms create a uniform environment with a considerable increase in the scale and density of buildings [5]. Also, due to the certain technological developments, many modern activities contribute to various forms of pollution, such as noise, shocks, vibrations and light caused by machines and vehicles [5]. Therefore, authorizing restoration, modification, new construction, demolition and deforestation within the protected perimeter, historic district can be shielded from physical, visual, cultural and socioeconomic impacts of activities in its surroundings [5].

#### **Criterion 3 | Preservation of Traditional Land-uses patterns**

Characteristic civic, religious and social functions, that the town has acquired over time, need to be under protection. These symbolic functions represent values which characterize the urban life, for instance welfare facilities (hospitals, orphanages, retirement homes), entertainment venues (amphitheatres, movie-theatres, operas, cinemas) and education amenities (universities, libraries, foundations, museums). Moreover, traditional trades, crafts and industries have also be linked with the socioeconomic context of historic areas, therefore the relevant commercial premises and workshops need to be maintained. Alternatively, new activities should be compatible with the character of the historic town [6]. These activities should support the daily life of the local inhabitants and contribute to their well-being [9]. Particularly, new functions, such as services and tourism, could be important economic initiatives, if only residential function is maintained [9] and traffic congestion is avoided.

## **2.2 Urban Design**

#### **Criterion 4 | Balance in Soft and Hard Landscaping**

The conservation of historic cities needs also to achieve the timeless balance between urban growth as well as the built and natural heritage. This interrelationship of geomorphology, spatial organization and transportation system configures the identity of historic areas. Apart from the manmade elements, a wider urban context includes also the site's topography, geomorphology, hydrology and natural features [9]. Gardens, parks and periurban forests are also important for the safeguarding of the local

biodiversity, which includes fauna and flora. An inventory of public and private open spaces with their vegetation can be drawn up, not only to preserve them but also to foster the spread and accessibility of green spaces. Meanwhile, these changes can also avoid further the urban heat islands [10] as well as to enhance the biodiversity evolution.

#### **Criterion 5 | Appropriate Urban Mobility Model**

Nowadays, the wide spatial footprint of transportation has deteriorated aesthetically and functionally open spaces in the cities. Therefore, non-polluting public transport systems, instead of individual cars need to be introduced in historic towns. Also, the routing systems have to be redesigned to facilitate pedestrian traffic, linking them efficiently with the public transport [5]. Although traffic and parking issues are mostly regulated by town planning, parking facilities should preferably be remained outside protected zones [6]. In particular, any traffic infrastructures above and below ground, such as car parks and subway stations must be planned in ways that will not damage the historic or archaeological fabric or its environment [10]. Similarly, the construction of major motorways must not penetrate a historic town [6], even though their necessity both for commercial and passenger transport. Consequently, appropriate supply systems and services in urban life must be harmoniously introduced in historic areas.

#### **Criterion 6 | Harmonized Urban Design**

Through the appropriate regulations, bill-posting, neon signs or other kinds of advertisement, erection of poles, electricity or telephone cables and placing of television aerials [4] should be prevented. For instance, electricity and other cables can be installed underground, coordinated easily with the integrated development of the road system [5]. Similarly, street pavements and furniture should be planned so that they fit harmoniously into the whole and prevent all forms of vandalism [5].

### **2.3 Urban Fabric**

#### **Criterion 7 | Conservation of Architectural Heritage**

Each historic area has a rich building stock from different historic periods and with distinct architectural features. Interior and exterior appearance of buildings is characterized by their scale, style, construction methods, materials, colors and decoration [6]. Therefore, public services through a participatory process, which engages the local community and multidisciplinary teams of architects, historians and engineers, should make an assessment of architectural heritage in the historic area. This procedure can determine which buildings must be preserved, which be preserved under circumstances and which might be expendable [6]. Meanwhile, any intervention by public or private sectors should be combined with a thorough documentation of existing conditions of the building and its surroundings [6]. Also, it's required that standards are defined for the work of maintenance and improvements [5].

**Criterion 8 | Harmonious Integration of Contemporary Architecture**

Contemporary buildings at historic places must meet the aesthetic requirements in harmony of heights, colors, materials, forms of facades and roofs [5]. Concisely, new buildings should be adapted harmoniously to the spatial organization [5], such as the average proportions, sizes of the lots and their position inside the plot [10]. At the same time, new structures should express the architectural trends of its time and place [10]. Although, contemporary elements can contribute under circumstances to the enrichment of the historic area, major quantitative and qualitative changes should be avoided. Otherwise, these interventions should clearly result in the improvement of the urban environment, its cultural values and the well-being of its occupants [10].

**Criterion 9 | Appropriate New Function in Historic Premises**

Historic premises with their traditional functions have characterized their surroundings as well as the whole district. Therefore, new function should be harmonized with the history of the building, to conserve its position within the urban fabric. Also, when new functions have to be introduced in historic buildings, major internal changes, which can remove or alter drastically their valuable features, should be avoided.

**2.4 Socioeconomic Structure**

**Criterion 10 | Preservation of Intangible Heritage**

Historic towns, apart from their built wealth, provide to their inhabitants traditional living patterns [5]. Oral traditions, performing arts, rituals, festive events, expressions, knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe constitute the intangible heritage of historic areas [7]. This interrelationship between the cultural and social practices and the place confirms how the spirit creates the space and at the same time how the space structures this spirit [10]. Also, knowledge and skills to produce crafts should be safeguarded, as the timeless productive resources in the region. Therefore, skilled workers or craftsmen need undergo training to conservation works and indispensable crafts techniques, in order to prevent threats due to the processes of industrialization [7].

**Criterion 11 | Identification of Cultural Diversity**

In general, intangible cultural heritage is a mainspring of cultural diversity [7], as always safeguards the spiritual achievements of different societies throughout the history. Material and spiritual elements that express the historic character of the town, have already taken diverse forms across time and space [8]. The diversity of cultural, religious and social activities in the past [5] proves the historic layering [9]. Different communities that have inhabited historic towns over the course of time must be respected and valued [10]. Their cultural activities, goods and services convey identities, values and meanings. Therefore, they must not be treated as solely having commercial or expendable value, due to either ICTs development or unilateral promotion of living patterns from the richest countries [8]. On the other hand, the analysis of socioeconomic and cultural activities, ways of life, as well as social relationships, coupled with

demographic data [5], can show the plurality in historic cities as well as record the alterations about the social and functional diversity.

### **3 Methodology Implementation: Argos, Peloponnese**

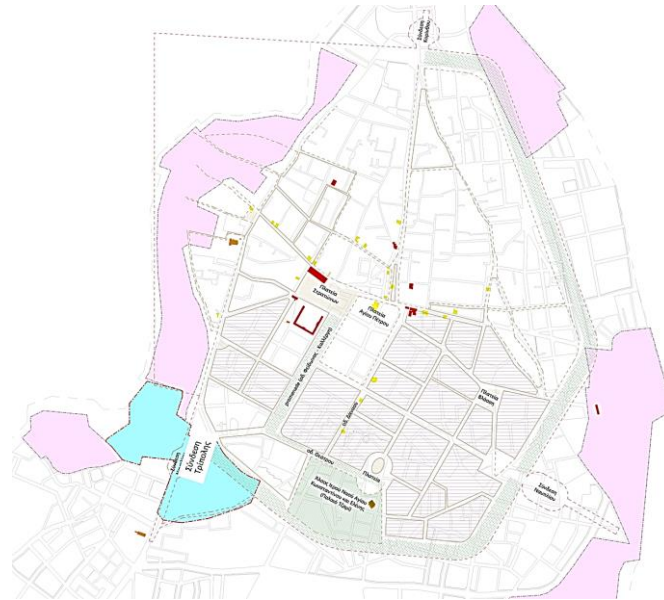
This assessment methodology includes the identification of urban heritage as well as the evaluation of current conditions based on the aforementioned criteria. Argos in North-East Peloponnese, which is one of the oldest cities in Europe, has been chosen as the case study.

#### **3.1 Identification of Urban Heritage**

Argos is located within less than 13km driving distance from the UNESCO World Heritage Property: Archaeological Sites of Mycenae and Tiryns. It is bounded from two rivers northeast; Charadros and Inachos and two hills west; Larissa and Aspida. In the periurban area, Erasinos river passes through the mountains westward and flows into the Argolic Gulf, where a wetland, named Roumani is configured in the south. On the west side, small settlements around agricultural field crops in the Argolid Plain have been developed.

Analyzing the city planning proposal of architect Rudolph de Borroczun in 1831, the modern city of Argos had distinct boundaries with three city-gates Nafplio, Korinthos and Tripoli (Fig.9), linked through a peripheral esplanade inside the riverbed of Charadros. This neoclassic approach is also distinguished through the street grid of orthogonal blocks southwest, the vegetated boulevards which connect the public spaces as well as the six-hectare park behind the old mosque with an elliptical square.

Regarding the public spaces, in the intersection between main city axes; Korintheta-Danaou in north-south direction and Karantza-Tsokri-Vassilisis Sofias in west-east, major religious, civic and social activities have traditionally been concentrated. The cathedral, the old town hall, the municipal agora, the public garden (Fig.1), historic hotels, cafes and retail stores as well as modern museums are located at these two squares of both Saint Peter (Fig.3) and 'Kapodistrian' barracks. Around this major public space (Fig.17), secondary local centers exist in the extension of the regional roads inside the urban tissue, which connect Argos with eight neighboring cities.



**Fig. 9.** Master plan of historic area in Argos, which includes the recognized protected district, the neoclassic quarter as well as the settlement at the foothills (Archive of I. Kartsonakis)

Moreover, many of the historic premises are characterized by the neoclassic architectural style, distinguished locally by their scale, layout, stone materials and colors. Most of them consists of old family residences (Fig.10,11,15) or served civic activities, such as the train station, the town hall, the municipal agora (Fig.21), barracks, schools, associations (Fig.14), hotels, cafes (Fig. 12) and retail stores (Fig.13). Meanwhile, indigenous morphological and structural elements and a distinct building's layout on the plot, from the pre-revolutionary era, have emerged in premises like the barracks; former agora or houses with wood-structured porches, surrounded the backyards.

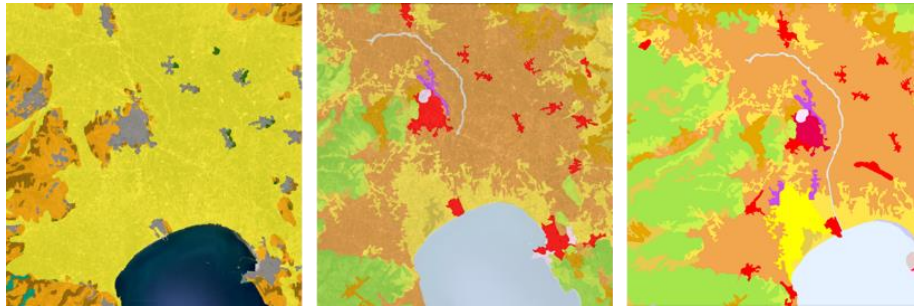


**Fig. 10.** (Left-up) Tsokris’ family residence (Archaialogia Online) **Fig. 11.** (Left-down) Trikoupis’ family residence (Google Street View) **Fig. 12.** (Middle-up) Old café “Thivaïou” (Archive of I. Kartsonakis) **Fig. 13.** (Middle-down) Kostantopoulos’ retail store (Archive of I. Kartsonakis) **Fig. 14.** (Right-up) “Danaos” mansion (Danaos Association) **Fig. 15.** (Right-down) Gordon’s residence – French Archaeological School (Archaialogia Online)

### 3.2. Evaluation of Current Conditions

#### A. Urban Planning

According to the Greek Legislation of 1982 [20], the urban pattern with neoclassic characteristics is not included in the boundaries of the recognized historic district, which involves mostly the two major squares, the Tsokri street and the church of Saint Ioannis Prodromos with its surroundings. Moreover, no regulations about interventions in both private and public spaces in historic quarter are implemented today. Similarly, no buffer zone has been identified around the protected area, which is surrounded by archeological sites, such as the Ancient Theater, Agora and Larissa Castle southwest and modern neighborhoods. Specifically, on both sides of Korinthou street, new structures are not harmoniously integrated in historic spatial organization, where few open spaces with dead-end streets are observed. However, this densely development might prevent the urban sprawl inside the Argolid Plain. Nowadays, changes are imminent, due to industrial and wholesale activities at the brow of the city as well as suburbanization that pose an irreversible threat for the traditional agriculture. Despite their extended spatial footprint throughout three decades (Fig.16), since 2010 no further preventive regulations have been added in revised General Development Plan [21].



**Fig. 16.** The development in periurban area of Argos in 1987 (Left), 2000 (Middle) and 2018 (Right) through Corine Land Cover maps. Industrial areas are symbolized by purple hatch and settlements by red (WWF, 2023)

## B. Urban Design

In 2014, through a regeneration project of the historic center, new street pavements, furniture and permanently installed structures were added in two major squares, in contrast to their traditional character (Fig.17). In particular, a concrete-built water pit with a bridge as an extension of Danaou street (Fig.2,6,23) reverses the old public garden (Fig.1), whereas extravagant shade canopies instead of endemic trees were located (Fig.22). Paving finishes, drainage inlets, lighting fixtures, signages and benches are differentiated widely, with no attention to the whole design of public space in the historic area. Whereas the previously redesigned public square in front of the court of law, is characterized by balance between hardscapes and vegetated areas, finally the regeneration proposal neglected the existing features; colors, materials and style. Homogeneity is also disrupted around the traditional trade streets, called Venizelou and Tsal-dari. In particular, arbitrary structures interrupt the visual relationship with the church of Saint Peter (Fig.24-25), in conflict with the group of listed buildings.



**Fig. 17.** Major public spaces before the interventions in 2014 (Left), based on the design proposal (Middle) and following the project implementation (Right) (Municipality of Argos-Mykines)

In general, most of the contemporary interventions include more impervious hardscapes instead of trees and flowerbeds planting with low irrigation needs. Given that the temperature of Argos ranges between 0-45°C and the yearly precipitation is about 500mm, nature-based solutions already presented in old view images, have to be

reinstated. Due to the densely street grid and plot area coverage, greening of undeveloped spaces is difficult, therefore vegetation can be integrated mostly in archaeological sites, public spaces, private patios and front yards.



**Fig.18.** (Left-up) Visualization of regeneration proposal in front of the agora (Municipality of Argos-Mykines) **Fig.19-21** Views of the square around the agora (April 2024, Archive of I. Kartsonakis) **Fig 22-23** (Right- up & down) View of the square of Saint Peter, including shade canopies and the bridge above water pit (April 2024, Archive of I. Kartsonakis)

In proximity to the historic area eastward, many junctions have replaced former pedestrian spaces as a result of traffic control. For instance, in front of the historic building of “Vlassi” family, parked cars around the triangular island, split the public space down the middle. Similarly, many public and private spaces have been transformed into parking lots, such as the proposed neoclassic square behind the old mosque as well as the neighboring plot of listed building “Danaos” Association. Following the regeneration project of 2014, parking in front of the agora has been prohibited and two squares are connected with pedestrian roots. However, no alternative transportation modes, such as biking and walking, have been widely adopted. Access to Argos is feasible nowadays only by cars or interurban buses. Unfortunately, the historic trainline, which connected Peloponnese with Athens city-center in the past, has been ceased.



Fig. 24. View of Tsaldari street (Argolikos Archival Library of History & Culture)

Fig. 25 Current conditions of Tsaldari street (Google Street View)

### C. Urban Fabric

Regarding the historic buildings in Greece, the Ministries of both Environment and Culture have the jurisdiction for their protection. Either at the list of “*preservable buildings*” or “*recent monuments*”, only 45 premises have been inscribed in Argos, whereas 50% of them has both designations [23,24]. The majority of preservable buildings have been inscribed in 1982, at the same year with the historic district designation, while since 1997 no new inscriptions exist [24]. Other samples of vernacular architecture are observed at the foothills, which are not under protection even though they could be designated as a group of historic buildings. On the other hand, no regulations further have been implemented for the unique designated group of buildings in Venizelou and Tsaldari streets (Fig.24-25).

Through an inventory regarding the current conditions of listed buildings, only 46% of them has been restored, whereas 40% needs to be repaired and 7% is under demolition. Similarly, 31% of the premises is abandoned and only 51% serves functions. In particular, today the municipal agora and the train station are closed, whereas the old townhall as well as the old school behind that have lost their original uses. Unfortunately, the old cafes, called “*Iraion*” and “*Thivaïou*” (Fig.12) as well as historic hotels “*Grand Hotel des Etrangers*” and “*Agamemnon*”, which surround the square of Saint Peters, today are also closed. Except of the impact in historic building conservation, the loss of traditional uses also affects the life in public spaces and main streets. Observing old images, with inhabitants on the way with retail stores on both sides of Tsokri street, a vivid public life is presented, however today, mostly abandoned stores, parked cars and badly-maintained premises exist.

Moreover, institutions and museums have been introduced in historic buildings, such as the Archaeological Museum of Argos in the residence of Dimitrios Kallergis, the Byzantine Museum of Argolis in “*Kapodistrian*” barracks as well as the residence of Thomas Gordon, which belongs now to the French Archaeological School (Fig.15). Also, “*Danaos*” Association, located in a neoclassic mansion, preserves its original mission (Fig.14), whereas other private residences have welcomed new activities, such as at the Argolis Chamber of Commerce and Industry. Similarly, historic family residences, including Tsokris (Fig.10), Trikoupis (Fig.11), Makrigrannis and

Kostantopoulos, could house cultural or administrative activities, as an opportunity for the socioeconomic progress in the region.

Apart from the restoration of historic properties as well as how compatible a new function should be, contemporary buildings must harmoniously have been integrated inside and around the historic district. However, concrete-built blocks of flats or mixed-uses properties have been erected, neglecting the surrounding of monuments or the homogeneity of the cityscape within the Tsokri street and the two major squares, designated as protected areas. These inappropriate structures disrupt further the coherence of spatial organization, due to their height, scale and land coverage. Similarly, when the structural system, enclave's materials, proportion of the openings and overhangs, the colouring as well as signages in new buildings don't fit harmoniously in the historic environment, they have tremendous impact on the conservation of its aesthetic values.

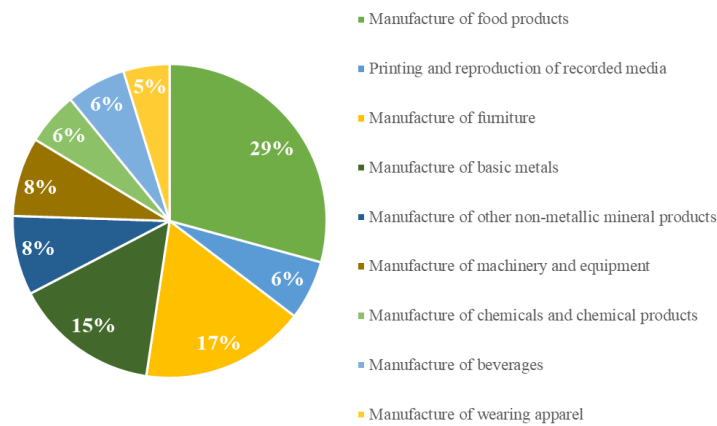
#### **D. Socioeconomic Structure**

The Municipality of Argos-Mykines has approximately 40 thousand inhabitants, that consists of the 6% of the population in the administrative region of Peloponnese. In particular, a network of small cities, including Tripoli, Kalamata, Nafplio and Sparta concentrates half the population of the region, in contrast with other regions in Greece, where urban population is based on one city, such as Ioannina, Patra, and Larisa. However, in relation to 2011, the number of inhabitants has been reduced approximately 5% by 2021. Concerning the educational attainment in Argos, statistics don't reflect inequalities in the situation of women and men, however differences between the national and municipal level are observed. In particular, 32% of the population has completed the primary education in Argos instead of 23% at the national level. Similarly, only 10% of the population in Argos reaches the level of post-secondary or tertiary education instead of 17% nationally. These indicators are important enough, not only for how to inform the local citizens about the heritage conservation, but also for the diagnosis of socioprofessional identity in Argos.

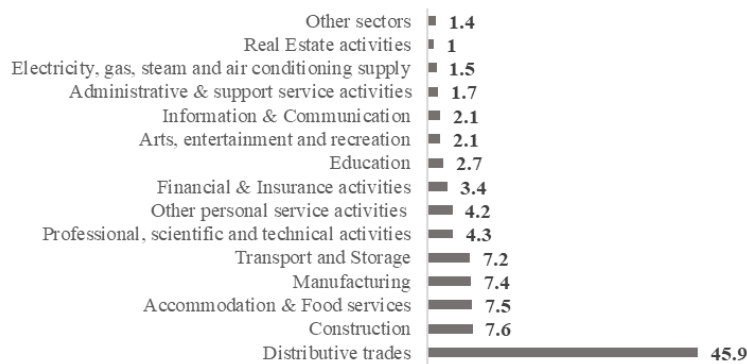
This city has a tradition in agriculture. Specifically, today crops per percentage of cultivated land by hectares are classified by olive groves (26%), citrus fruits (21%), stone fruits (4%), vineyards (1%) as well as vegetables (1%). Regarding citrus fruits, production is characterized by oranges (76%), clementines (11%), mandarins (7%) and lemons (2%). Similarly, about stone fruits, mostly apricots (85%), peaches and nectarines (7%) are cultivated. Generally, at regional level, Argolis provides the majority of vegetables' crops, whereas mostly fruits and oilseed crops are concentrated in Lakonia and Messinia.

This relationship between the agriculture and the food manufacturing is showcased through the industrial heritage of Argolis. For instance, "Kyknos" tomato canning factory, located in proximity to Argos, has been designated as recent monument, as demonstrates the evolution of this industry. Today, Argos maintains these productive resources [22] in the manufacturing of food products (26%), beverages (6%) and wearing apparel (6%) (Fig.26). Moreover, furniture making (17%) has been emerged as a new creative industry [22]. Assessing how important is the manufacturing for the productive sectors in Argos, based on the number of registered enterprises in the local Chamber, a sectoral analysis was applied. In particular, distributive trades (46%) have a dominant

role in enterprises of Argos (Fig.27), whereas construction (7.6%), accommodation and food services activities (7.5%), manufacturing (7.4%) as well as transport and storage (7.2%) have been developed at the same level [22].



**Fig. 26.** Sectoral analysis of manufacturing with percentages per number of registered enterprises in the Argolis Chamber of Commerce and Industry, 2021 (Statistical graph by I. Kartsonakis)



**Fig. 27.** Sectoral share of the number of enterprises, based on data of Argolis Chamber of Commerce and Industry, 2021 (Statistical graph by I. Kartsonakis)

Although this exemplary presence of local manufacturing, accompanied with the rich architectural heritage could encourage the cultural tourism in Argos, this potential is underrated, as observed by the low percentage of accommodation and food services activities (7.5%) in Argos [22], compared with both regional (15.3%) and national (12%) levels.

## 4 Conclusion

This assessment methodology can demonstrate the vulnerability signs for each criterion, in order to direct a more efficient and practice-oriented strategy for urban heritage conservation in Argos, Peloponnese. Taking into account the existing legislation and how applicable or restrictive is regarding the modern interventions, problems can be recorded. Within this framework, through participatory procedures, either preventative or corrective actions can be prioritized per criterion. Meanwhile, this criteria compliance, coupled with the procedures of land development and urban planning, can demonstrate opportunities for the regeneration of historic areas. Ultimately, only through the safeguarding of the integrity and authenticity of the historic environment can urban heritage, as an irreplaceable resource, contribute meaningfully to sustainable development in historic areas.

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