



## Application for the IAPH 2023 Sustainability Awards

### SUPPORTING INFO

#### The Port of Taranto: general Overview

Ports and their neighboring cities play a considerable role in the local and global economies: port cities around the world are located at the edge of sea and land and serve the same function of facilitating the flows of goods and people. While all port cities are different, they have some common features: together they face important challenges and recognize the need to facilitate the interactions between multiple stakeholders. Over the centuries, many port cities have developed particular shared values, better known as *maritime mindset* or *port-city culture*. The maritime culture is indeed the main element to create a bridge between the Port and its floating community.

**The port-city of Taranto** is nowadays interested by a process of redefinition of its economic and cultural dimensions that, over the last decades, have been mainly focused on the industrial vocation of the local economy. The industrial framework of Taranto has overwhelmingly influenced the perception of the city's image and cultural approach both locally and globally. The city's landscape has always been mainly associated to the smokestacks of the steel factory thus contributing to link the image of Taranto to negative and environmentally critical opinions and considerations, at the expense of the natural beauties and huge cultural heritage owned by the city.

Further to the crisis of the steel industry and the consequent instability of the Taranto steel plant, both local, regional and national Administrations started to reshape their policies in order to make action on strategic plans based on the redesigning and differentiation of both economic and productive activities, thus having to **provide the city with greener and more sustainable future perspectives**.

To rethink this preconstructed view of the city, The Port Network Authority of the Ionian Sea – Port of Taranto (PNAIS), together with a number of local private and public Administrations decided to change the course and put the *Sea* at the heart of a general strategy to **renew and revitalize port-city relationships**, starting from the assumption that **Taranto is a Sea capital of the Mediterranean** whose future perspectives need a regeneration push.

*“Ports are at the crossroads of transition”*. The PNAIS is acting as a proactive initiator for **making the port of Taranto a resilient place** where to align different stakeholders and to improve the business climate in order to: reach sustainability goals, increase cohesion with the city and, above all, **create a new portscape**. Indeed, the newest public function of ports is growing away from the traditional municipality structure; it is moving towards the image of a more *‘entrepreneurial’* port, as ports can make the difference in the greening of transport and industries and in supporting energy transition processes. Going forward, it is expected that the port city integration will further



increase and port authorities are asked to play an important role as neutral and natural matchmakers whose mission can be a relevant point for the transition towards the *port of the future*.

The Port Authority is strengthening its pivotal role in facilitating sustainable transport, either through **promoting sustainable cruise tourism** or **generating energy efficiency opportunities** as well as **providing source for innovation and a new cohesion between the port and the city**.

The PNAIS, in close cooperation and coordination with the Municipality of Taranto, agreed to share a collaborative governance for the programming and redesigning of several interventions aimed at regenerating both the material and immaterial links connecting the port to the city - starting from the urban waterfront - and to **enhance the participation of women, young and elderly groups** in a set of activities that will be free of charge for final users.

### **Port and territory: one objective covering a constellation of actions.**

The **Three-Year Operational Plan 2023-2025**<sup>1</sup> of the PNAIS identifies six main strategic objectives to be achieved by 2025: *business intelligence & digital port operations, sustainability, energy transition & environmental transition, infrastructures & logistics, port and territory, internationalization, governance & accountability*. To reach these goals, the Authority is shaping its mission in order to keep up with the evolution of the port ecosystem and to bring new development visions in the port domain.

The above objectives are the result of an innovative strategy that the PNAIS decided to adopt in order to **measure the image of the port through the active participation of the local stakeholders**. By the launch of a dedicated survey, the PNAIS had the possibility to define a list of targets to be achieved over a period of three years by listening to the needs and perceptions of the local community in order to *plan the port with the city* as satisfactorily as possible to the stakeholders. At the same time, the Authority had the possibility to raise its *institutional accountability* and to set a criterion on the image perceived by those actors involved in the poll.

“*Port and territory*” is the main umbrella covering a constellation of actions focused on the development of a broader place-making and social integration strategy. The aim is to support the regeneration of the relations between the port and the city of Taranto, as the whole port ecosystem is striving to put this element as a priority capable of inspiring a number of activities. Some of them have already started; some others are currently undergoing in the port and are almost close to see the light. To this aim, there is an open dialogue, participation and mutual cooperation with the local territory and key players for the promotion of a sustainable economic, social and urban recovery of Taranto port-city.

The port of Taranto can also count on the support of an international cluster (*e.g.: AIVP, IAPH, MEDPorts, ESPO, Medcruise, Clia, ecc.*) playing a strategic role for allowing Taranto port-city to disclose new visions and dynamics and to increase the strengths and the results of those actions launched from a local to global perspective. Indeed, the present time is a thriving period for the Port of Taranto as it is witnessing the full and global revitalization of its activities and today, more than ever, the city needs to rethink its vocation as a port-city as many other port cities around the globe. The key drivers underlying the measures and strategic plans related to the city of Taranto support the flourishing of projects and initiatives that can allow the transition to a “*New Taranto*”, the Sea Capital and Mediterranean sustainable cruise and tourism destination.

To achieve this goals, **the PNAIS is developing a set of projects aimed at promoting a dynamic and steady evolution of land-sea interfaces into crossroads of cultures and hubs of commerce**

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<sup>1</sup> <https://port.taranto.it/index.php/en/news-eng/2417-news-of-07-04-2023-approvazione-del-nuovo-piano-operativo-triennale-2023-2025-2>



**and trade**, ensuring thereafter the general evolution of the city's sea-based landscape and identity and the improvement of social integration between the port and the city of Taranto:

- *The regeneration of the urban "Waterfront Mar Grande"*
- ***The animation of an "Open Port", the Port Exhibition Center of Taranto***
- *The development of cruise tourism*
- *The Taranto Port Days*

In terms of financial coverage and commitment, the realization of the above mentioned actions will depend on the internal budget of the PNAIS which will bear the relevant costs of realization. The following sections will provide further details about the cost of each action falling into the broader "Port and Territory" project.

The above projects contribute to the achievement of the following UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs):

