

## Nicosia Roadmap

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# About HUB-IN

## Mission

Hubs of Innovation and Entrepreneurship for the Transformation of Historic Urban Areas (HUB-IN) aims to foster innovation and entrepreneurship in Historic Urban Areas (HUA), while preserving their unique social and cultural identity and the environment. The project adopts innovation and entrepreneurship as the main drivers of urban regeneration in HUAs and it is fully aligned with the International agendas for Cultural Sustainable Development (UNESCO) and Cultural Heritage Strategy (Council of Europe). In the first stage of HUB-IN, a network of Hubs of innovation and entrepreneurship will be developed in the HUAs of eight city partners (Lisbon, Slovenska Bistrica, Brasov, Nicosia, Genova, Grand Angoulême, Belfast, Utrecht) and in the second stage, the resulting methods and tools will be scaled up to a global network of HUAs in follower cities and the HUB-IN Alliance. The Hubs of Innovation and Entrepreneurship will test, demonstrate and pilot activities of co-creation and co-design in three main clusters with the potential to deliver sustainable transformation of HUAs: 1) Culture and Creative industries, 2) New Lifestyles and 3) Resilient and Human Connected Places.

## Vision

HUB-IN expects to contribute to reverse trends of abandonment and neglect of historic heritage in a systemic way through the creation of networks of Hubs where innovation will be the main driver. The project will also have a direct impact on the creation of new sustainable opportunities for local traditional businesses and for the development of new creative skills and jobs.

## The Consortium behind HUB-IN



# FOREWORD

Our historic urban area is the last divided capital of Europe. The historic city on the green line suffers from neglect and abandonment. We want to nurture our historic urban area as an exciting place, full of opportunities for everyone to promote. To reach its potential, the area needs to undergo a process of urban transformation and heritage-led regeneration through innovation and entrepreneurship, while preserving its unique cultural, social and environmental identities and values.

As a city we are committed to fight against the neglect and the abandonment of our historic urban area. Our goal is to turn it into a people centric, revitalised, vibrant destination, home to a range of innovative and creative entrepreneurs, where the community thrives.

The present roadmap includes proposals to find the balance between the functionalities of the HUA, allowing an inclusive use of the public domain, and the people’s needs.

With this roadmap we are engaging to combine the following three pillars into our strategy:

- Culture and Creative Industries (CCI) – Cultural heritage is at the centre of innovation and creativity, to nurture socio-economic development.
- New lifestyle (NLS) – Innovative sustainable living patterns, inclusivity, and diversity are the main ingredients to improve wellbeing.
- Resilient & Human Connected Places (RHCP) – Sustainable and regenerative use of resources, community cohesion, digital and human connectivity are key to improve ecological and social resilience of historic places.

Attaining this goal calls for the engagement of everyone involved. Therefore, this roadmap is the result of a co-creation and co-design work conducted in the framework of the HUB-IN project.

A series of interviews and workshops were organised during the period October 2020 – May 2022 revealing Nicosia Municipality’s vision of development for the historical urban area. The results pointed out the relevant issues the historical area was facing, as well as ideas to overcome these.

In addition, the main local stakeholders in Nicosia were brought together and involved in the development of the present roadmap to envision the HUB-IN place in Nicosia. Therefore, a co-design workshop, co-hosted by the Municipality of Nicosia and Cyprus Energy Agency took place on 28<sup>th</sup>-29<sup>th</sup> of March 2022.

In addition to this participatory workshop with local stakeholders, an online survey for residents took place from March 2022 onwards to collect their perception and wishes for the HUB-IN area.

The HUB-IN Nicosia team is also exploring synergies and ways of collaboration with key sectoral areas in the municipality of Nicosia through peer-to-peer meetings with relevant departments (e.g planning, culture, master plan etc). We expect that this interaction could pave the way for higher level decisions. At this stage it is also relevant to start a local clustering process with other research and innovation projects (European or local) that may influence the HUB-IN Nicosia pilot. There are strong synergies to explore and opportunities to learn from



such as the CYENS Centre of Excellence, a research centre set up through a teaming grant coordinated by the Municipality of Nicosia, including a state-of-the-art makerspace. Other interesting synergies can be built with the YUFE (Young Universities for the Future of Europe) project, the local NGO, Gardens of the Future and more.

Close cooperation between stakeholders and citizens was of decisive importance in the design process, and this ongoing partnership will likewise play an essential role in bringing the strategy to life.





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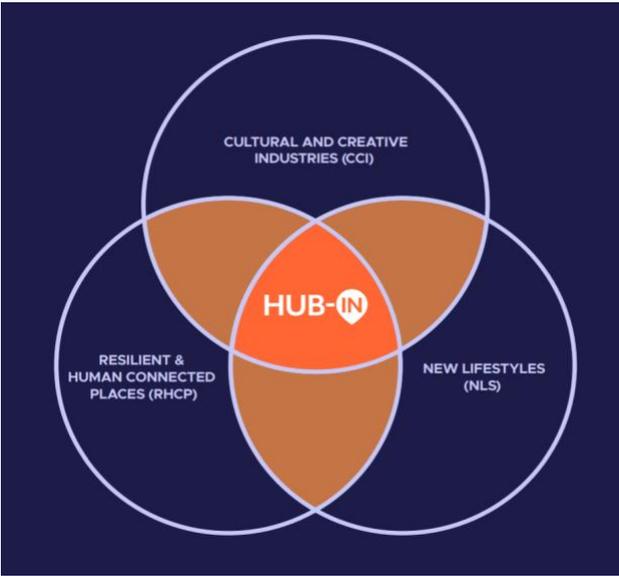
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# Intro: what makes a HUB-IN place

**HUB-IN Places<sup>1</sup>** | A physical or virtual hub of innovation, where cultural wealth and heritage provide a unique competitive advantage – a key resource for enhancing the sustainable regeneration of historic urban areas. HUB-IN Places are distinguished by their local action and their global interconnection. They are local hotspots of creativity, community empowerment and entrepreneurship, bringing together local stakeholders, academia, industry, and local governments. HUB-IN Places are hubs of innovation recognised by their project integrated portfolio approach that blends three HUB-IN clusters of innovation. They are places to co-design, test and develop new solutions, ideas, and creative businesses in a real urban environment. HUB-IN Places are also globally interconnected in a network that favors sharing knowledge, open innovation processes and the development of innovative circular models.

**HUB-IN clusters<sup>2</sup>** | The HUB-IN Framework concept adopts a strategic cluster approach to the regeneration of Historic Urban Areas (HUA) through innovation and entrepreneurship. HUB-IN clusters of innovation are economic, social and ecological hotspots of innovation at the neighborhood scale for the heritage and cultural led regeneration of HUAs.

HUB-IN identifies three main common clusters of innovation that should not be seen as silos of activities, but rather intertwining activities across the three clusters complementing and contributing to the development of HUB-IN Places.



|  |  |   |
|--|--|---|
| <b>Culture and Creative Industries (CCI)</b>         | Cultural heritage is at the centre of innovation and creativity, to nurture socio-economic development.  | Innovative products and services   Adaptive reuse of traditional skills   Cultural and creative tourism |
| <b>New Lifestyles (NLS)</b>                          | Innovative sustainable living patterns, inclusivity, and diversity, are the main ingredients to improve well-being.  | Consuming & prosuming   Living   Mobility   Health & well-being   |
| <b>Resilient &amp; Human Connected Places (RHCP)</b> | Sustainable and regenerative use of resources, community cohesion, digital and human connectivity, are key to improve ecological and social resilience of historic places. | Environmental balance   Empowering communities   Liveable and human connected places                    |

<sup>1</sup> HUB-IN Framework: The Ingredients of a HUB-IN Place - available at: <https://hubin-project.eu/library/the-ingredients-of-a-hub-in-place-hub-in-framework/>  
<sup>2</sup> HUB-IN Clusters of Innovation – HUB-IN Framework – available at: <https://hubin-project.eu/library/hub-in-clusters-of-innovation-hub-in-framework/>

# Roadmap in a nutshell



# HUB-IN

## Nicosia

# Roadmap

## Vision

**Safeguarding, transmitting, and promoting the historic memory of Cyprus and at the same time being the powerhouse of culture and innovation-led transformations.**

Developing Nicosia HUA aligning and connecting heritage, culture, community, memories with future proofing the city. Taking on international motives yet having a clear and solid link to the historical lineage of the Nicosia population.

### Nicosia's HUB-IN Place

Nicosia's Historic Urban Area (HUA) is also known as the Nicosia walled city: the old city centre surrounded by Venetian Walls dating from 1567. Nicosia HUA is full of art, culture and architecture, with museums, galleries, shops, bars and restaurants nestled in narrow alleys. The HUB-IN place will not be a specific physical location, but rather become the umbrella to connect and showcase the strong elements of the HUA.

## Values



**Catalyst for  
Urban Culture**



**Transformative  
Place**



**Emotions &  
Heritage**



**Open &  
Accessible**



## Aim

To interconnect existing developments and initiatives, enhancing their performance and impact. The aim within is to develop an integrated strategy, acknowledging the vibrant, active and collective elements of the historic area that stimulate culture, sustainability and innovation towards revitalization of the HUA.

### Mission 1

#### The Hood | Establish a Strong and Inclusive Neighbourhood: improving the local experience and creating a sense of belonging

- Promote the creation of the image “Greener Nicosia” by improving public green spaces and access- where possible - to yards/roofs and other unknown spaces within the urban fabric
- Develop a new sustainable way to navigate in the HUA more effectively, by redeveloping and reframing the narrative around urban mobility and especially soft mobility

### Mission 2

#### The Platform | Establish a user-friendly platform for HUA to serve as an umbrella and a bridge within the HUA Nicosia network

- Provide opportunities for the HUA users and members of the neighbourhood ( e.g. pharmacies, mini kiosks, doctors, etc.) to allow for proximity services to residents and improve quality of life within the HUA
- Digitalise the HUA by contributing to the development of a Nicosia digital twin, by opening a call for experimentation and assistance of forging and nurturing the digital twin with the main goal to make it more inclusive and complete

### Mission 3

#### Activations | Establish a strong mechanism of HUA to be welcoming, transparent and measurable for all

- Develop a programme to promote the integration of heritage and innovation, by fostering the upscaling and upskilling of traditional activities, and promote the connection of the material and immaterial heritage with today and future needs and functions
- Develop a programme to collaborate with city ambassadors (individuals/ community leaders/ organizations), to serve as the mediators between the brand strategy, the municipality strategic plans and the citizen’s voice

# Part 1 – The context making the HUB-IN place in Nicosia

This part presents the context conditions in Nicosia at the start of the HUB-IN process. It includes the main local policies and strategies, as well as key projects and actions already ongoing in Nicosia. The local strategies, policies and actions are linked to the most relevant HUB-IN clusters to provide a clear overview of the local framework conditions based on which the HUB-IN place in Nicosia is developed.

## 1.1 - An introduction to Nicosia

Nicosia, the largest city, and the capital of Cyprus is located approximately at the geographic centre of the island. Since 1974, it remains divided, with its historical centre directly affected by this division, as the green line includes not only wild vegetation but also rundown buildings splitting Nicosia in two. The Nicosia district covers an area of about 111km<sup>2</sup>, and its historical centre, located within the venetian walls, extends to about 2km<sup>2</sup>. Due to the surrounding fortifications, the historic centre cannot expand in terms of land area to accommodate new facilities. Nicosia district has a population of around 250,000 inhabitants whereas the Nicosia Municipality has 55,014 residents (based on 2011 Census data), and this is expected to increase considerably by 2025 due to local reform. The population of the historic centre is around 9,000 inhabitants.

Following the Turkish invasion in 1974, a significant percentage of derelict and empty buildings, as well as underused plots, are reducing the attractiveness of the area for occupancy.

Nicosia is currently open for investment, with great new urban projects being completed, significant funding for public upgrades in the commercial core and a growing internal economy. Creating value through innovation and nurturing Cyprus’ entrepreneurial spirit are amongst the country’s top priorities. Therefore, enhancing life and work, promoting the cultural and creative industries and the academic and innovation ecosystem has been at the core of the Strategy of the Nicosia Municipality since 2014.

With a constantly evolving system of advanced and modern infrastructure, Nicosia is fast becoming one of the emerging investment fund centres in Europe, offering unique incentives for businesses. In the previous (2014-2020) European Structural Funds Programming Period, the Municipality of Nicosia has invested a total of 273 M EUR in different projects, including for infrastructure and advanced technical infrastructure and a major communications and transport centre in the heart of Nicosia. A major part of the budget was invested in policies and actions that will support entrepreneurship and innovation. These actions have also resulted in the establishment of the CYENS Centre of Excellence<sup>3</sup> (formerly known as RISE) that brings together the three public Universities, with the



<sup>3</sup> For further information: <https://www.cyens.org.cy/en-gb/>

Municipality as the coordinator and Advanced European Partners. The city hosts more than 30 000 students annually and is home to a rapidly growing start-up ecosystem.

In collaboration with researchers, start-ups and the municipal services, the area will aspire to contribute to the development of new innovative products, applications and services that will contribute to positioning Nicosia's central core for business demands.

Social policies and actions are seen as crucial, with the Municipal Multipurpose Centre of Nicosia having been created to house social programmes, providing social services to vulnerable groups, contributing to the enhancement of social cohesion as well as social inclusion in Cyprus.

At a regional level, a considerable important milestone has been the 5<sup>th</sup> Trilateral Cyprus-Greece-Israel Summit signed in December 2018, on cyber security, Smart and Sustainable Cities (SSCs), which establishes a mechanism to become a credible model of constructive regional cooperation. Israel, known as the "Start-up Nation", continues to work closely with Greece and Cyprus to encourage projects in the field of innovation and technology. Many successful tech companies have already either relocated or expanded in Cyprus, using the country as a base and gateway to and from the EU.

## 1.2 - Existing strategies

This section intends to highlight key contributing strategies, initiatives and projects that are relevant to the developments of what we define as the HUB-IN Place, that aim to improve or prepare the grounds for a more effective local hub. Therefore, a key strategic objective of this roadmap is to serve as a 'bridge' and interconnector of what already exists and become a catalyst to accelerate further the soft infrastructure of the city.

### INTEGRATED SPATIAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

The strategy will receive funding from the European Structural and Investment Funds (Programming Period 2021-2027), the central government as well as municipal funds.

In the framework of this Integrated Spatial Development Strategy, the municipality is implementing a smart city project for the supply, installation and operation of telecommunication infrastructure and smart city systems (IOT) for the needs of the regeneration projects of Nicosia municipality. The main objective of the project is the development and use of new technological means that will improve the management and functionality of the urban environment in the city of Nicosia. As a smart city, Nicosia will be a place where traditional networks and services will become more efficient, using digital and telecommunications technologies, for the benefit of residents, visitors and businesses.

In the framework of this strategy, Nicosia Municipality will collaborate with five other adjacent municipalities. The aim is to create a Metropolitan Nicosia that is smart, sustainable, environmentally friendly, human-oriented and a place where knowledge and innovation meet culture and creativity, offering quality living and opportunities for all.

## SUSTAINABLE ENERGY AND CLIMATE POLICIES

Nicosia Municipality is one of the active Covenant of Mayors<sup>4</sup> signatories in Cyprus, with an ambitious ongoing, well performing and long-term **Sustainable Energy Action Plan (SEAP)** prepared in 2014, which also includes actions for the historic city, the main area where the HUB-IN Hub will be located. This further enhances the Municipality's commitment for the green transition. Nicosia Municipality will soon be moving towards updating its SEAP to SECAP (Sustainable Energy and Climate Action Plan), addressing both climate mitigation and adaptation with a 2030 horizon.

The area is also part of the '**Sustainable Historic City Districts**' (2018-2020) aiming to integrate action and deliver innovation towards sustainability and climate change mitigation, mobility and accessibility, economic development and tourism.

## SMART CITY STRATEGY

### Culture and Creative Industries (CCI) | New Lifestyles (NLS) | Resilient & Human Connected Places (RHCP)

A Nicosia Smart City Strategy is currently being deployed and implemented by the Municipality, set to span from 2018 to 2028. It aims to transform the Cypriot capital into a smart city, with widespan wireless network, smart lighting, smart waste and smart urban mobility. CYENS flagship has developed a project called [iNicosia](#)<sup>5</sup>, which set up a digital twin of the city to further enhance relevant actions.

## CYENS - A CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE AT THE HEART OF THE CITY

### Culture and Creative Industries (CCI) | Resilient & Human Connected Places (RHCP)

**CYENS** Centre of Excellence, formerly known as RISE, is a research and innovation centre created in 2018 and is funded by national, EU and local sources. Its coordinator, the municipality of Nicosia, cooperates with the Max Planck Institute (Germany), University College London (UK) and the three public universities of Cyprus (University of Cyprus, Cyprus University of Technology and Open University) to promote an ecosystem where cultural and creative industries coexist with scientific and research institutions to bring about innovation in Nicosia. Its research is focused on Interactive Media, Smart Systems and Emerging Technologies. It has a makerspace, co-working space, exhibition space as well as research labs. The centre is in the historical area of the city and is designed to be accessible to everyone.

## MARKET BUILDING OF THE OLD TOWN HALL (AGORA)

### Culture and Creative Industries (CCI) | New Lifestyles (NLS) | Resilient & Human Connected Places (RHCP)

The building, currently under renovation, will host the operations of the CYENS Centre of Excellence in Research and Innovation and is part of the priorities of the Nicosia Municipality's strategy for Integrated Sustainable Urban Development to promote research, innovation and entrepreneurship. In addition to the laboratories and application demonstration areas, the premises of the Market building will host common work areas, a seminar area, a multimedia studio, a fabrication lab, an electronic standards area etc.

<sup>4</sup> For further information: <https://www.covenantofmayors.eu/>

<sup>5</sup> For further information: <http://inicosia.rise.org.cy/>

## SHARING AND CIRCULAR ECONOMY

### Culture and Creative Industries (CCI) | New Lifestyles (NLS) | Resilient & Human Connected Places (RHCP)

CYENS and other institutions within the HUA are currently developing Makerspaces to allow creatives to share skills and spaces. There are also co-working spaces growing in the city. In addition, Nicosia is home to other green initiatives promoting urban farming ([Gardens of the Future](#)<sup>6</sup>) and saving food waste ([ZFWC](#)<sup>7</sup>).

## SUSTAINABLE HISTORIC DISTRICTS PROJECT

### Culture and Creative Industries (CCI) | New Lifestyles (NLS) | Resilient & Human Connected Places (RHCP)

The 'SUSHI' project on the Sustainable Development of Historic Areas<sup>8</sup> (2018-2020) took a holistic approach to addressing the common challenges of historic areas, in six cities from five European Mediterranean countries. The focus was on the transformation of historic sites into sustainable, resilient and inclusive communities and in this framework, Nicosia prepared an Action Plan for its HUA. The Sustainable Historic City Districts project paved the ground for the HUB-IN project with the ambition to transform the historic centre of Nicosia.

## CREATIVE INDUSTRY QUARTER

### Culture and Creative Industries (CCI)

A project that aims at upgrading the built environment, preserving / enhancing the distinctive character of the area and individual buildings as well as improving the public spaces of the city to function as a pole for the development and promotion of entrepreneurship, technology industries, research and innovation for the Cultural and Creative Industries.

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<sup>6</sup> For further information: <https://gardensofthefuture.com/>

<sup>7</sup> For further information: <https://www.facebook.com/ZeroFoodWasteCyprus/>

<sup>8</sup> For further information: <https://sustainablehistoriccitydistricts.wordpress.com/districts/nicosia-cyprus/>

# Part 2 – The HUA hosting the HUB-IN place in Nicosia

This part presents the historic urban area of Nicosia where the HUB-IN place will be located.

## 2.1- The Nicosia historic urban area

Nicosia historic urban area (HUA) is also known as the Nicosia walled city: the old city centre surrounded by Venetian Walls dating from 1567. Nicosia HUA is full of art, culture and architecture, with museums, galleries, shops, bars and restaurants nestled in narrow alleys. The city's historic past unfolds into a unique labyrinth of old churches and mediaeval buildings.

Nicosia Municipality has developed a clear strategy for the walled city within the “Central Nicosia Area Scheme” which includes the city within the walls as well as the surrounding area outside the venetian walls (see figure 1). The Municipality is focusing on infrastructural upgrades, enabling the area to become again a vibrant business hub and a lively neighbourhood. The area is ideally positioned to become a regional quality business and financial centre and accommodate the needs of the contemporary enterprise world.

Within the city strategy, the pillars of development include:

- supporting and promoting culture and developing the cultural infrastructure
- preserving and promoting traditional architectural heritage and the distinctive character of the area, either through complete restoration of buildings or through maintenance and restoration of building facades (facade landscaping)
- upgrading of the area's infrastructure (undergrounding utilities services, upgrading of the rainwater collection system, installation of new street lighting and urban furniture etc)
- promoting entrepreneurship and business innovation
- attracting new uses such as research centres, higher education institutions etc
- strengthening infrastructure for social services

To implement the strategy considerable financial resources, both from national, European and local funds have been invested and several big and small-scale projects are currently being realised within the HUA. Given the unique situation of Nicosia, as the last divided capital of Europe, and the capital where East meets West, there is a continuous institutional effort to encourage private investments in the area to further revive the historic centre.

The municipality, in addition to providing services in a sustainable manner, aims to enhance the wellbeing and life of residents and visitors, whilst promoting social and economic development. An important goal of the strategy for the walled city is the promotion of urban transformation through innovation and entrepreneurship, respecting local culture as well as the social and environmental values.

There is a rapidly growing start-up ecosystem surrounding the location with incubators, accelerators and Innovation Hubs (CYENS, Idea Cy, Microsoft Innovation Centre, Chrysalis Leap, Junior Achievement). Furthermore, the area benefits from innovative research from high-quality institutions and universities (30 000+ students annually), with most of their departments being in proximity of 2 km radius from the Historic Urban Area (i.e. University of Cyprus, University of Nicosia, Frederick University, European University). Therefore, highly educated and experienced human talent and a range of incentives provide opportunities for progress at the centre of Nicosia. Indeed, Nicosia's historic centre is described as the country's local hub as it blends knowledge, culture, creativity and innovation.

Still, the economic crisis of 2013 and the COVID pandemic have led to further abandonment of the historic centre, with businesses, shops and restaurants closing down, resulting in further desertion and disrepair and a downturn of the economy. In parallel there are ongoing construction/road works for infrastructural upgrades in the neighbourhood. All this shows that now is the time to have a fast-forward outlook towards a more sustainable and inclusive future of the urban historic area of Nicosia.

Establishing the specific area of the HUB-IN Place as an up-and-coming innovation and entrepreneurship centre of the city, that integrates culture, invests in youth, fuels entrepreneurship and innovation and respects the natural environment will further enhance the efforts and promote sustainability and inclusion.

What makes the Historic Centre of Nicosia a good place to live, for you?

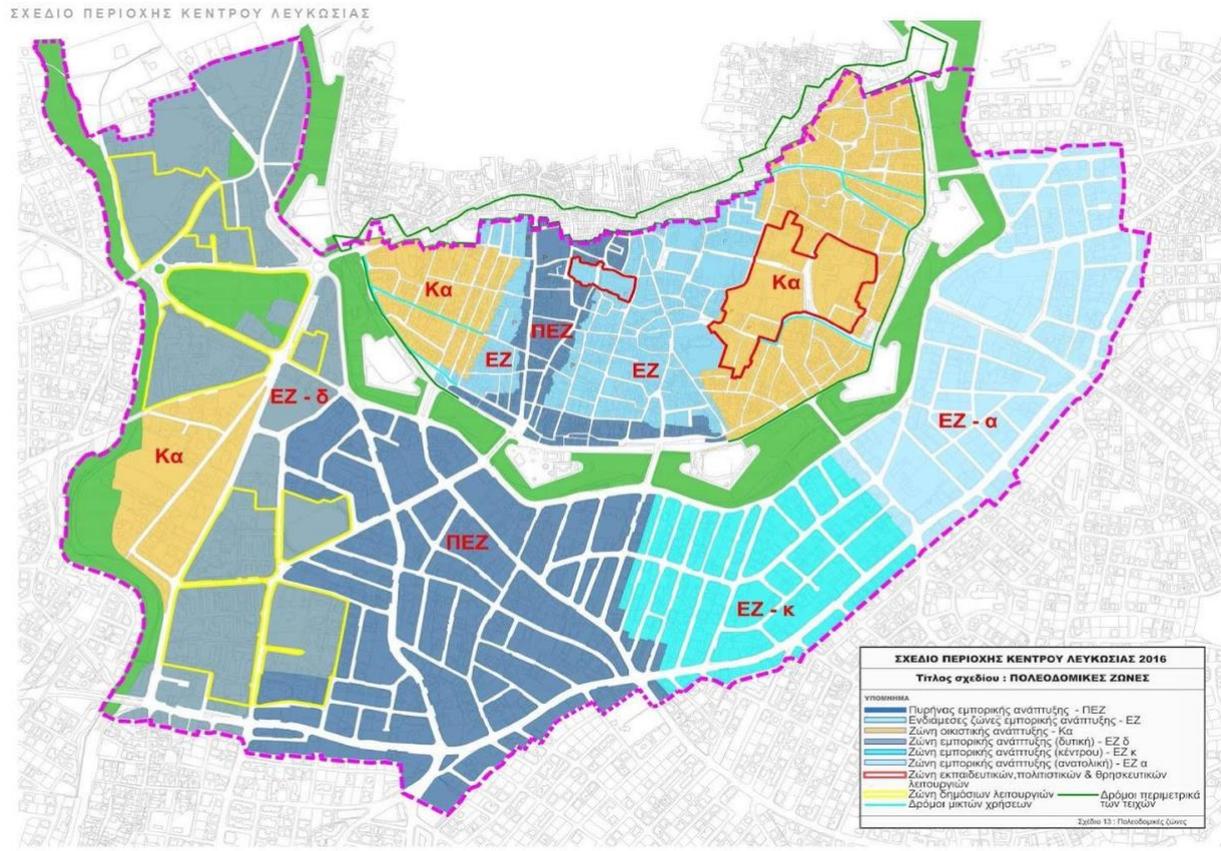
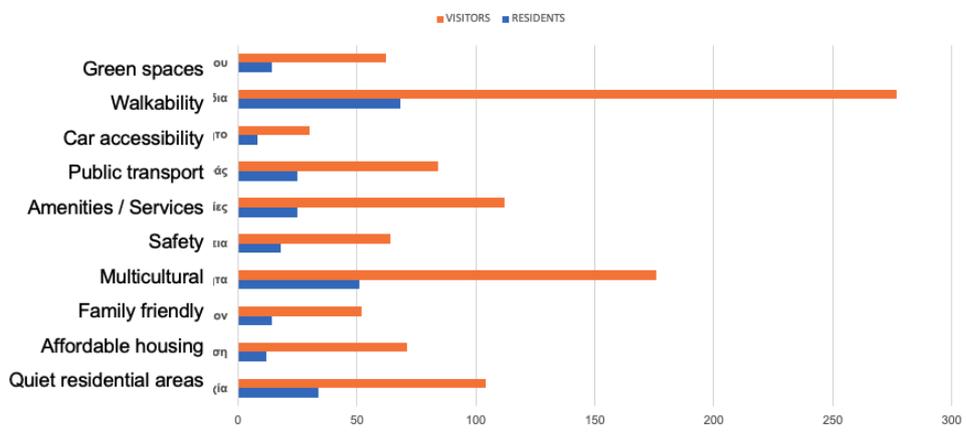


Figure 1 Area Scheme for the Nicosia Central Area for the pilot area

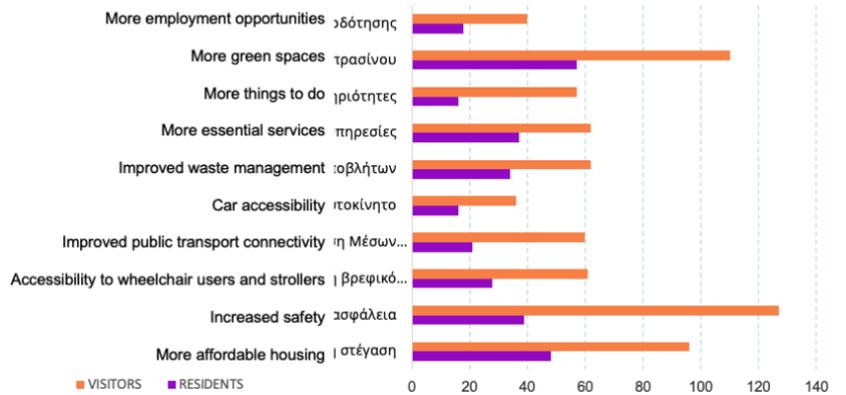
## 2.2 - Perception of the HUA

In March 2022, a survey was launched in the framework of HUB-IN to collect key information about the perception of the HUA. The survey targeted residents and HUA users.

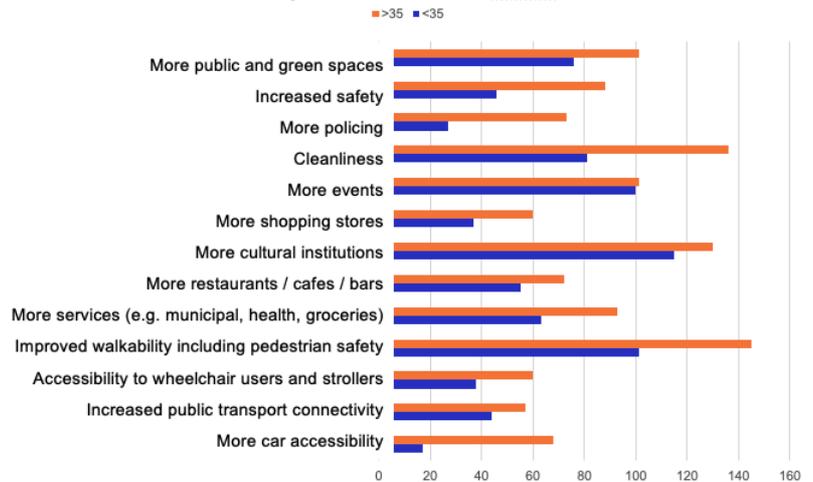
Key findings on the opinion of residents and visitors and their perception on the HUA:

- Walkability, accessibility, and mix uses make the city centre liveable and good for improving the entrepreneurial spirit.
- However, Nicosians wish for more green spaces, better conservation of buildings, more affordable housing and rentals and an improved sense of belonging.
- The cultural value of the historic centre is appreciated by visitors, as well as the local community of Nicosia. The tangible and intangible heritage of the area are what makes the HUA unique. Thus, there is support for the idea of bringing back the vibrant cultural vibe of the past and giving space to youth, to craftsmanship and the creative industry for developing the future of the HUA. More frequency of cultural events, happenings and more density of museums, independent creative businesses, designer shops and craft shops are needed.
- Nicosia’s ambition to transform the HUA into a Hub of Entrepreneurship and Innovation could bring more opportunities for employment in the centre, as well as attract younger populations to live in the centre and increase the liveability of the area. Innovation and Entrepreneurship seem to be understood as drivers for revitalisation. However, there are hesitations about the risk of gentrification and the inclusivity of the process (making sure all groups who are impacted are informed, consulted, empowered to participate).

What would make the Historic Centre of Nicosia a good place to live in the near future?

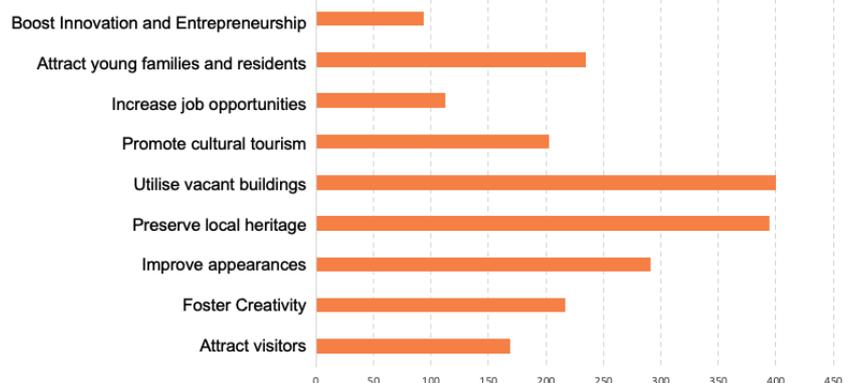


What would make you visit the Historic Center of Nicosia more often?



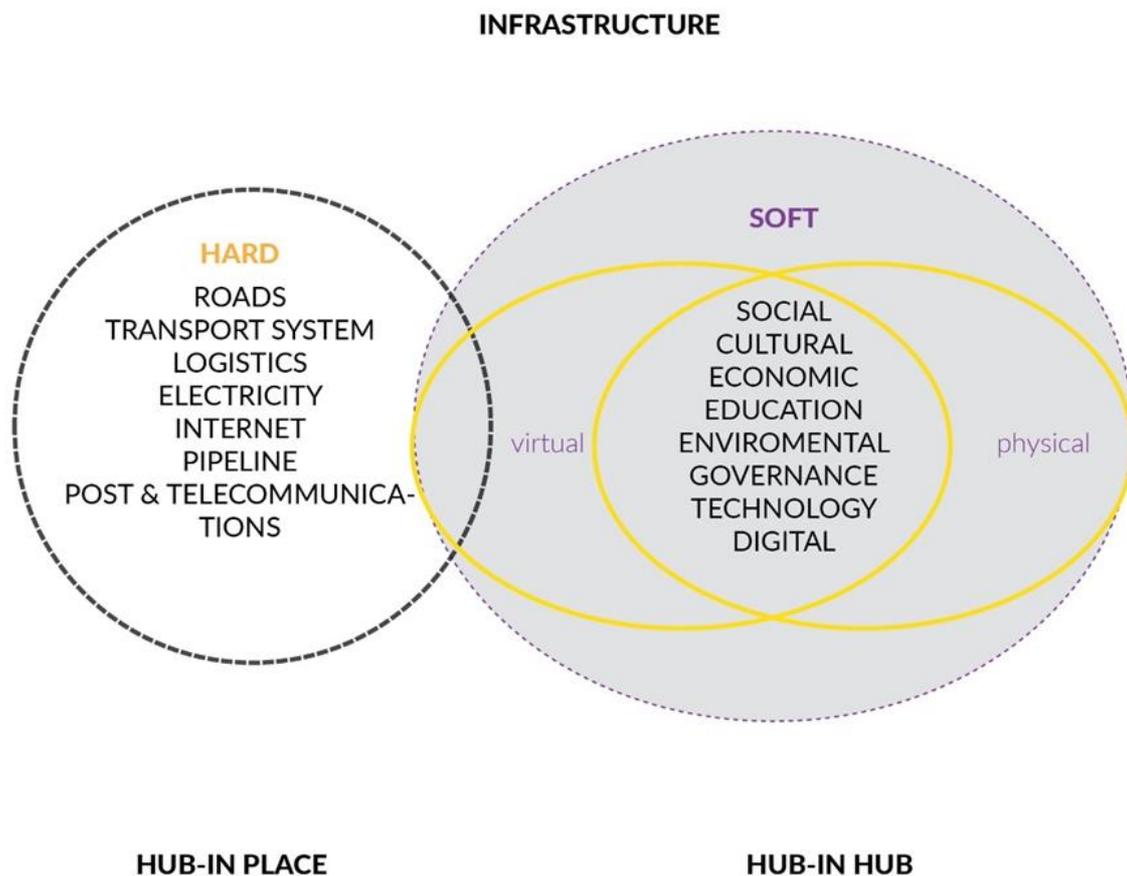
Apart from the survey, other methodological instruments were used to enhance the understanding and perceptions of the HUA. During the co-design phase, in March 2022, a multi-stakeholder workshop, 1:1 interviews and facilitation exercises were conducted, allowing key stakeholders of the HUA to contribute to defining the unique identity of the area and to

What do you think should be an immediate priority for the future of the Historic Center of Nicosia



framing what defines the HUA through memory, emotional stimulators as well as a series of important ‘happenings’ that took/take presence before/during/after. 28 locations have been identified collectively, democratically and transparently<sup>9</sup>.

**Our aim is to interconnect existing developments and initiatives, enhancing their performance and impact via the development of an integrated strategy, acknowledging the vibrant, active and collective elements of the historic area that stimulate culture, sustainability and innovation towards the revitalisation of the HUA.**



<sup>9</sup> For further information:  
<https://www.google.com/maps/d/u/0/viewer?ll=35.17249441763946%2C33.363430499999999&z=17&mid=1JTU1td0mj9jwgcgAkIlXzGAyFjm95sxZG>

## CHALLENGES

### POLITICAL CONSTRAINTS

- The division of the historic area (and of the whole island) creates a complex situation at a local, regional and national level
- Centralised power of central government leaves limited responsibilities and autonomy to local authorities (though Nicosia as the capital has more opportunities than other local authorities)
- Promoting the multiculturalism of the city as a rich advantage for future development of the HUA is challenging in a divided city where populations are divided and there is limited interaction.

### INVESTMENT

- It is difficult to attract investment as there is a lack of targeted funding and inadequate economic incentives
- It is difficult to attract new businesses as there is uncertainty about the future of the area and how real estate will develop considering the division and property issues.

### CLIMATE CHANGE

- Insufficient infrastructure and limited climate resilient public spaces (heat waves, flooding, loss of biodiversity etc.)
- The area is vulnerable to climate change. There is a heat island effect with social and environmental impacts.

### LACK OF STAKEHOLDER EXPERIENCE IN BEING ENGAGED

- Limited stakeholders' involvement and different/misaligned agendas and development interests
- Citizens are not fully informed and engaged with the ongoing actions
- Lack of coordinated community participation
- Creatives and other individuals that are considered as relevant stakeholders often act separately and are not represented by a collective or organisation. Thus, it makes it more difficult to engage individuals and emphasise shared interests.

## STRENGTHS & OPPORTUNITIES

### THE HUAS STRENGTHS DERIVE FROM THE SAME ELEMENTS THAT FORM ITS WEAKNESSES

- While confrontation, fragmentation and segregation are present, so are things such as coexistence, negotiation and compromise. These constant efforts in the city can be the foundation for a resilient city which cultivates the skills of an adaptive local community.

### AN AREA OF 'HUMAN SCALE'

- The fortified city centre is an area of 'human scale' and proximity making it more energetic than other areas of the city and active from morning to night. Social contact, feeling of belonging and a feeling of safety are present among inhabitants of the HUA.

### IDEAL LANDSCAPE FOR ACTIVE MOBILITY

- The Mediterranean climate and flat land offer ideal conditions for active mobility and a culture of socialising outdoors.

### PROGRESS HAS ALREADY BEEN MADE WITHIN THE HUA

- Along with public space rehabilitation projects, Nicosia has already restored and regenerated the Old Municipal Market and "STOA" building to host CYENS (Research Centre on Interactive media, smart systems and emerging technologies). Other support facilities are created to boost entrepreneurship and incentives (not only financial) are provided for businesses, creatives, and entrepreneurs to move into spaces along the Green Line.

## 2.3 - HUB-IN place

**HUB-IN Nicosia** | The HUB-IN Place aims to be an up-and-coming innovation and entrepreneurship centre of the city that interconnects existing developments and initiatives. The HUB-IN place will be in the historic centre of Nicosia, within the walls (with no specific physical location), however the digital presence might go beyond the physical boundary. It will comprehensively acknowledge and integrate the vibrant, active and collective elements of the historic area that stimulate culture, sustainability, inclusiveness and innovation towards the revitalisation of the HUA.



Given the many already ongoing projects and activities in the Nicosia HUA, a big part of the roadmap co-design process was focused on framing the HUB-IN place, identifying its role within the HUA development and its shape.

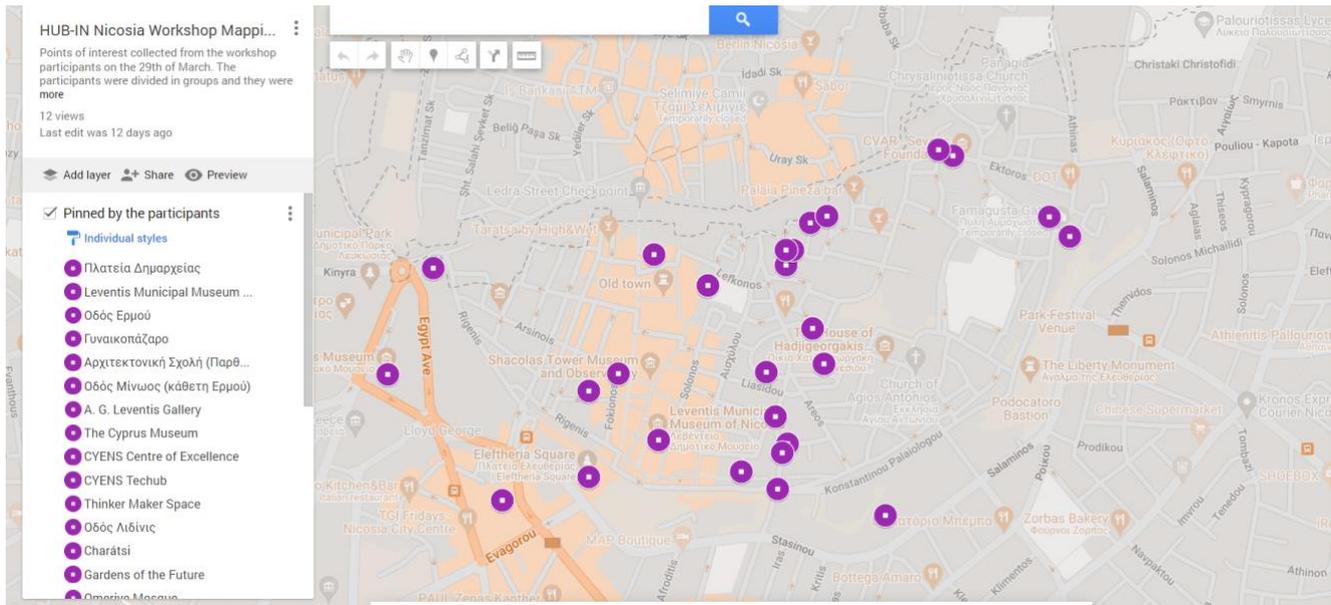
The main goal of the HUB-IN place will be to function as a connecting element between the different activities and initiatives already in place, to leverage on synergies and trade-offs among them. The HUB-IN place will become the umbrella to connect and highlight the strong elements of the HUA, with no specific physical location since several HUB-IN alike locations are already present/being developed in the HUA.

A digital, publicly accessible and user-friendly platform will be developed to access and keep active all the elements of the HUB-IN place (innovation spaces, cultural assets, other relevant locations).

The branding of the HUB-IN place will play a key role to provide a unique visual connecting element across the different “dots.”

### Nicosia HUB-IN place highlights from co-design workshop

During the co-design workshop, key stakeholders of the city and representatives from the Municipality came together to have a shared and mutual understanding of the Nicosia HUA future plans of the city. Using the foundations of the Nicosia Masterplan, key insights about the HUB-IN place were generated. The participants were divided in groups, and they were asked to choose three locations in the city that they consider interesting and important. The current landscape formerly defining the Nicosia HUB-IN place, based on the contribution of workshop’s participants, is indicated in the interactive map below<sup>10</sup>.



The map displays a list of pinned locations on the left side, including:

- Πλατεία Δημορχείας
- Leventis Municipal Museum ...
- Οδός Ερμού
- Γυναικοπάζαρο
- Αρχιτεκτονική Σχολή (Παρθ...
- Οδός Μίνυος (κάθετη Ερμού)
- A. G. Leventis Gallery
- The Cyprus Museum
- CYENS Centre of Excellence
- CYENS Techub
- Thinker Maker Space
- Οδός Αιδίνης
- Charátsi
- Gardens of the Future
- Ομορφιά Μουσείο

<sup>10</sup> To access the online map:

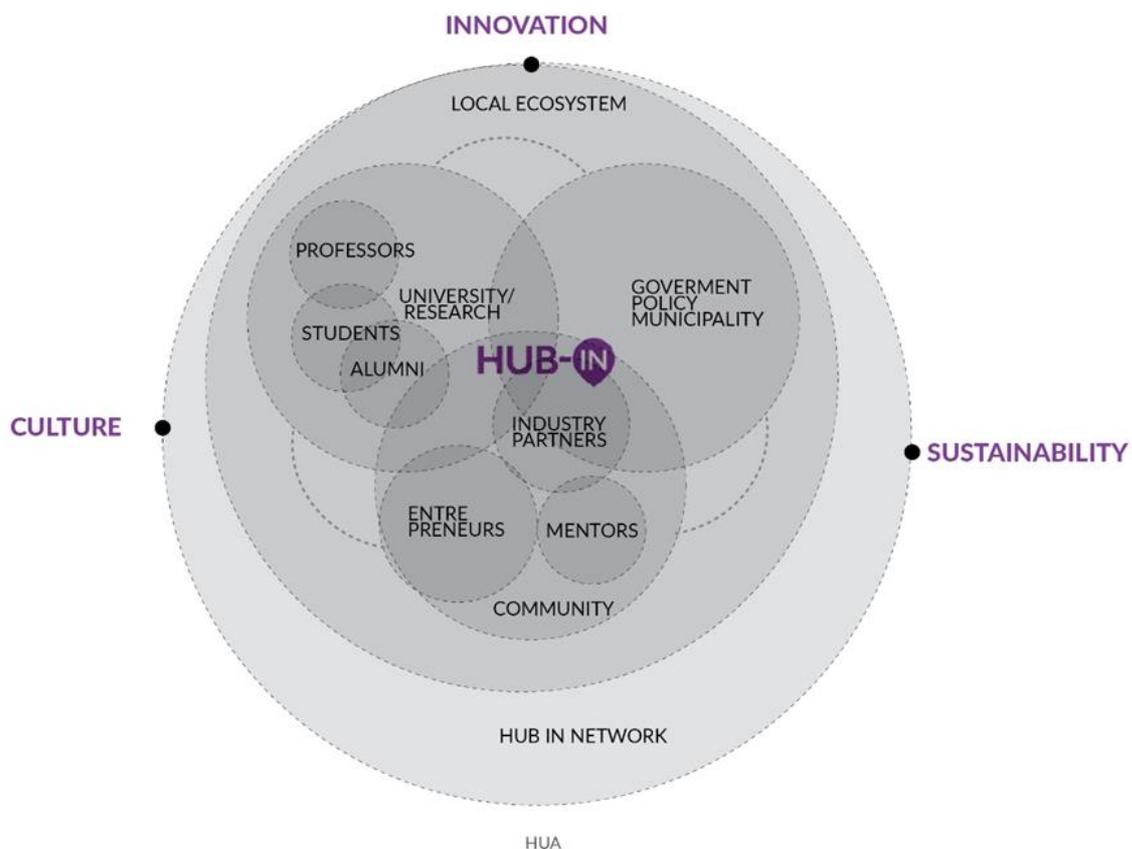
<https://www.google.com/maps/d/u/0/viewer?mid=1JTU1td0mj9jwgcAKlXzGAYFjm95sxZG&ll=35.17249452145692%2C33.36343049999999&z=16>

# Part 3 – The vision, values, and missions for HUB-IN place in Nicosia

## 3.1 - Vision

Safeguarding, transmitting, and promoting the historic memory of Cyprus and at the same time being the powerhouse of culture and innovation-led transformations.

Developing Nicosia HUA by aligning and connecting heritage, culture, community, memories with future proofing the city. Taking on international motives yet having a clear and solid link to the historical lineage of the Nicosia population.



## 3.2 - Values

Nicosia historic centre as a catalyst for **URBAN CULTURE** | museum, street culture, theatre, multi-ethnicity groups, creative shops etc

Nicosia historic centre as a **TRANSFORMATIVE** place | entrepreneurship, innovation, incentives to locals, new businesses, attract more visitors etc.

Nicosia historic centre through **EMOTIONS** and **HERITAGE** | feel like home, happy, sense of smell, paradise, magical atmosphere, traditional craftsmanship, local shops, memory/ nostalgia, unique architecture

Nicosia historic centre **OPEN** and **ACCESSIBLE** | bicycles, mobility, green spaces, yards, orchards in the old town, jasmine, cats, dogs

### 3.3 - Missions

The transformation of the Nicosia HUB-IN place to achieve the vision presented above, will be structured around the following main missions:

**Mission 1 | The Hood | Establish a Strong and Inclusive Neighbourhood: improving the local experience and creating a sense of belonging**

This overarching mission is looking at the HUB-IN place at its totality and aims to create a resilient, inclusive and sustainable neighbourhood, merging technology, local expertise, physical spaces and events. This mission is oriented towards revealing all these existing elements and making a more user-friendly discovery journey of the assets of the HUA area (this could include tours, campaigns, collaborations over green areas, rooftops, squares), creating a better quality of life for residents and visitors.

Main HUB-IN Clusters targeted: **New Lifestyles (NLS) | Resilient & Human Connected Places (RHCP) | Culture and Creative Industries (CCI)**

**Mission 2 | The Platform | Establish a user-friendly platform for the HUA to serve as an umbrella and a bridge within the HUA Nicosia network**

This mission aims to serve as a one-stop-shop platform to accommodate and interconnect all that is happening in the neighbourhood and allow users of the HUA benefit from it by offering peer-to-peer services, be it for a museum that wishes to have more street-style approach or an aspiring entrepreneur looking to be supported in the journey. The one-stop-shop will be blended (digital/physical) and linked to a potential re-organisation and modernisation of traditional activities and to new innovative ones.

Main HUB-IN Clusters targeted: **New Lifestyles (NLS) | Resilient & Human Connected Places (RHCP) | Culture and Creative Industries (CCI)**



### **Mission 3 | Activations | Establish a strong mechanism of HUA to be welcoming, transparent and measurable for all**

This mission is oriented towards the creation of stronger connections between segmented areas of the neighbourhood. In an effort to strengthen the local economy, the main goal is to maintain a vibrant identity and tradition of the place and bring everybody together by incentivising collaboration, synergies and alliances to be created among the strong and diverse assets of the HUA network (cultural organizations, multinational community groups, strong grass-root, youth attractive areas). This mission requires an emphasis to the branding essence of the HUA.

Main HUB-IN Clusters targeted: **New Lifestyles (NLS) | Resilient & Human Connected Places (RHCP) | Culture and Creative Industries (CCI)**

# Part 4 – Alliances, Partnerships and Portfolio of Actions

This part of the roadmap document includes the key actions identified during the co-creation process in Nicosia. The set of key actions represent the way the HUB-IN strategies and principles are translated into practices locally.

Each action is linked to the key HUB-IN Ingredients to which the action is more likely to contribute. As defined in the *HUB-IN Framework: The Ingredients of a HUB-IN Place*<sup>11</sup>, the ingredients represent the key factors and considerations that are required to enable innovative and entrepreneurial behaviour to emerge and flourish in historic urban areas.

A more detailed list of the action ideas co-created with the local stakeholders can be found in annexes.

## 4.1 - Overall governance aspects

What has derived persistently in the local co-design workshop is the challenge the municipality and in general the public governance has on non-effectively communicating, proactively and actively engaging with its citizens in the process of implementing strategic plans for the city.

With the aim to sustain a shared and mutual understanding between the Municipality's systemic process and the city's key stakeholders the HUA Hub wishes to be part of the solution and provide the support to enhance communication by following a participatory, grass-root approach to future implementation of the HUA plans.

## 4.2 - Portfolio of actions

### Mission 1: The Hood | Establish a Strong and Inclusive Neighbourhood: improving the local experience and creating a sense of belonging

- Looking at the HUB-IN place at its totality
- Revealing what is already there and making more user-friendly the journey of discovering the assets of the HUA area (this could include tours, campaigns, collaborations over green areas, rooftops, squares)
- Overall impact is to create a better quality of life to residents and visitors.

#### A1.1 Promote the creation of the image “Greener Nicosia” by improving public green spaces and access- where possible - to yards/roofs and other unknown spaces within the urban fabric.

1. **Alliances/Partnerships:** Commissioner of the Environment, Relevant Municipal Department, Gardens of the Future, New European Bauhaus, [Open Call]
2. **HUB-IN Ingredients addressed:** physical infrastructure, heritage, support organisations, sustainability
3. **Expected Impact:** improve walkability and aesthetic image of the city, environmental quality (air quality improvement, climate change resilience)

<sup>11</sup> available at: <https://hubin-project.eu/library/the-ingredients-of-a-hub-in-place-hub-in-framework/>

## A1.2 Develop a new sustainable way to navigate in the HUA more effectively, by redeveloping and reframing the narrative around urban mobility and especially soft mobility.

1. **Alliances/Partnerships:** associations of entrepreneurs in pedestrianised zones, local tour guides, Visit Nicosia (Tourism board), Relevant Nicosia Municipality departments, *[Open Call]*
2. **HUB-IN Ingredients addressed:** Physical infrastructure, marketplace/demand, support organisations
3. **Expected impact:** improve walkability, attract cultural tourism, facilitate interaction between stakeholders

## Mission 2: The Platform | Establish a user-friendly platform for HUA to serve as an umbrella and a bridge within the HUA Nicosia network.

- One-stop-shop platform able to accommodate and interconnect all that is happening in the neighbourhood
- Allows users of the HUA to benefit from it by offering peer-to-peer services via a digital/physical platform and linked to a potential re-organisation and modernisation of traditional activities, and to new innovative ones

## A2.1 Provide opportunities for the HUA users and members of the neighbourhood ( e.g. pharmacies, mini kiosks, doctors, etc.) to allow for proximity services to residents and improve quality of life within the HUA.

1. **Alliances/Partnerships:** VENN, Associations of local businesses, Ministry of Interior/Finance, Visit Nicosia (Tourism Board)
2. **HUB-IN Ingredients addressed:** Marketplace/Demand, Finance, Leadership, Support organisations, Innovation
3. **Expected impact:** strengthen bonds between diverse social groups, provide job opportunities

## A2.2 Digitalise the HUA by contributing to the development of a Nicosia digital twin, by opening a call for experimentation and assistance of forging and nurturing the digital twin with the main goal to make it more inclusive and complete.

1. **Alliances/Partnerships:** CYENS, Venn, *[Open Call]*
2. **HUB-IN Ingredients addressed:** digital infrastructure, knowledge, human resources
3. **Expected impact:** increase of citizen participation and creation of trust, improvement of planning and decision making

## Mission 3: Activations | Establish a strong mechanism of HUA to be welcoming, transparent and measurable for all

## A3.1. Develop a programme to promote the integration of heritage and innovation, by fostering the upscaling and upskilling of traditional activities, and promote the connection of the material and immaterial heritage with today and future needs and functions.

1. **Alliances/Partnerships:** Cyens Thinker Makerspace, NiMAC, *[Open Call]*
2. **HUB-IN Ingredients addressed:** Heritage, Knowledge, Leadership, Support Organisations, Marketplace / Demand
3. **Expected impact:** increase community cohesion and facilitate the celebration of local cultural identity

**A3.2. Develop a programme to collaborate with city ambassadors (individuals/ community leaders/ organizations), to serve as the mediators between the brand strategy, the municipality strategic plans and the citizen’s voice.**

1. **Alliances/Partnerships:** Community Leaders, Visit Nicosia (Tourism board), NiMAC, Municipality, *[Open Call]*
2. **HUB-IN Ingredients addressed:** Knowledge, Leadership, Support Organisations, Human Resource, Finance, Culture, Sustainability, Innovation,
3. **Expected impact:** increase community cohesion and facilitate the celebration of local identity



Potential business models that can be studied and applied from the HUB-IN Network:

- Hub Criativo Beato : An ambitious innovation hub reviving an abandoned military factory
- Largo Residencias: Utilising arts and cultural heritage to empower the local community
- Marineterrein: Becoming a new innovative city quarter after being sealed off for three centuries
- Buda Island : A haven for creativity and innovation
- Recentres Bordeaux : Creating a historic living city in Bordeaux's city centre
- Cultural Industries Quarter Sheffield: A city quarter moving from steel to cultural production
- Urban Living lab SKULL: A historic bazaar turned into an open living lab

# Part 5 - Brand Identity

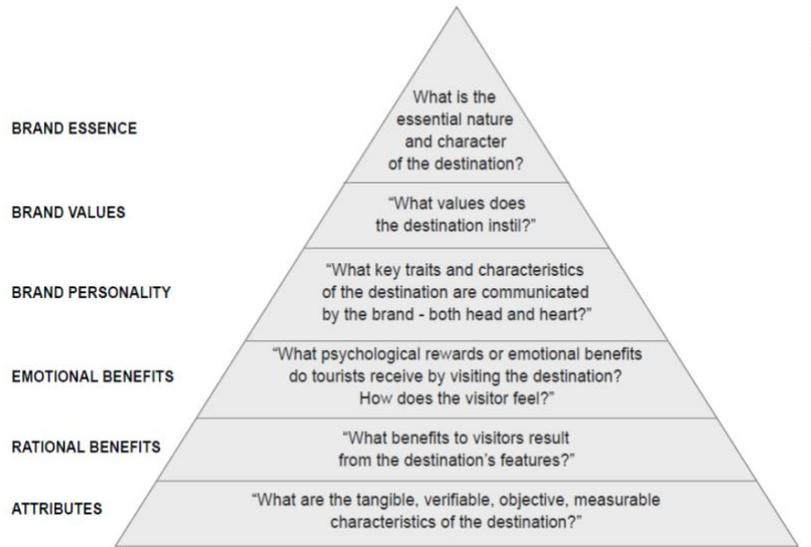


Image 1. Brand Pyramid Template - Source: A Practical Guide to Tourism Destination Management (2009)

With Energy Cities' support the HUB-IN team in Nicosia created the pyramid for their historic urban area (Image 2).

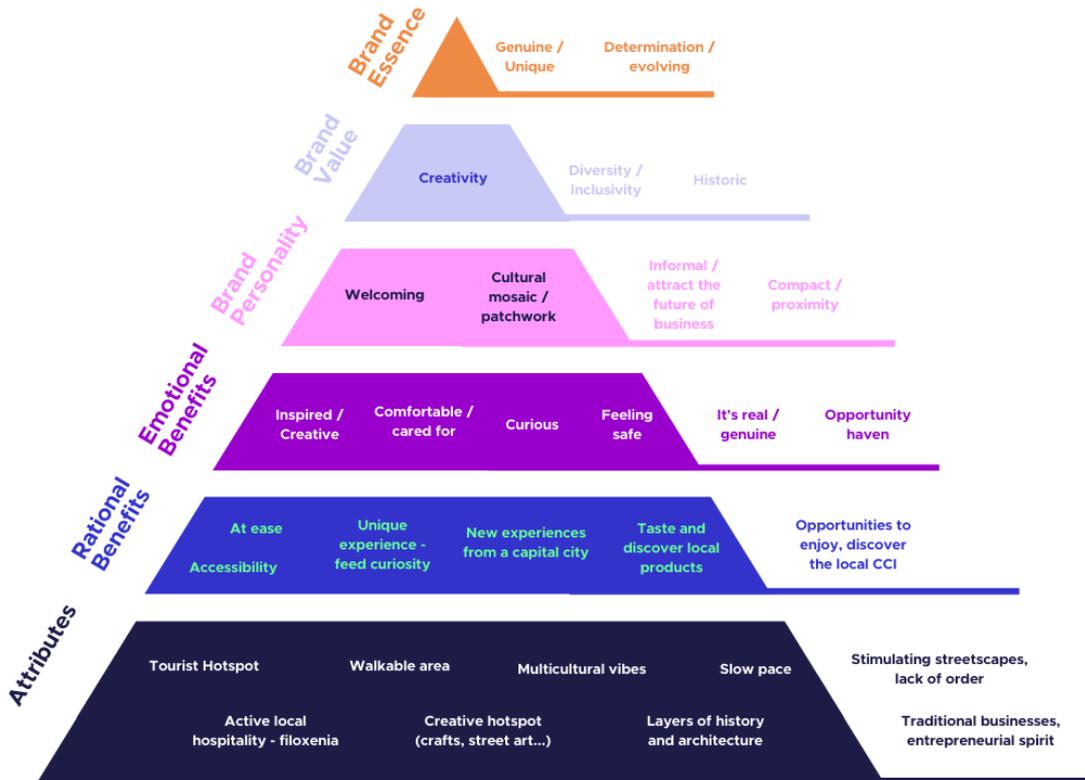


Image 2. Brand pyramid as filled in by the HUB-IN team in Nicosia

The pyramid was then used and adapted to produce the brand essence for the area. The different elements of the pyramid can be summarised as follows:

## Attributes

The historic centre is known for being the most touristic area in the city. It is easy to explore by foot and includes many heritage buildings from different ages. It is a very multicultural area and the creative hotspot of Nicosia. The walls and the chaotic streets are loved by visitors and contribute to the impression of being in a quite different type of European capital.

## Benefits

When in the area, people can appreciate the many layers of history, discover the local culture at their own pace. They feel curious, safe, and welcome in Nicosia's historic centre and have the impression that everything is at reach, accessible.

## Personality

The city centre of Nicosia is like the cool aunt you used to love when you were little: creative, knowledgeable, interesting, but also a laid back and genuine person. You want to be friends with them, you want to know more about what they are doing and take part. The communication style for Nicosia's hub should reflect this personality, this could be done by avoiding any jargon, using simple language and pay attention to inclusivity (gender, culture, age).

## Values

Openness, authenticity, and creativity are the core values of the brand for Nicosia's hub and should define the themes of the communication around it. Openness ensures respect and inclusion of diverse cultures, but it is also intended as staying open to innovative ideas. Authenticity reflects the importance that history and cultural heritage should have in the work of innovators, artists, and entrepreneurs, but also the willingness of the municipality to avoid gentrification in the area.

## 5.1 - In short...

**Look at the past and see the future:** the brand identity reflects the determination of the municipality to overcome outdated views and stereotypes around the city. Cultural heritage (material and immaterial) is important, locals should be proud of it and make sure it is valued, but it should also be the foundation for evolution, through innovation and creativity. The identity is like an invitation for everyone to take part in the transformation of the area.

# ANNEXES

The following annexes can be consulted in a separate document:

**ANNEX 1** - Citizens and Stakeholders Survey about the Historic Centre of Nicosia (results analysis for March 2021)

**ANNEX 2** - Co-design workshop report – May 2022



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