



AOSTA
CANDIDATE
FOR EUROPEAN
CAPITAL OF
CULTURE
2019

1 .
 – *Why does the city which you represent wish to take part in the competition for the title of European Capital of Culture?*

FOR A NUMBER OF years now, the city of Aosta has been affected by a major investment program, whose common denominator lies in culture, and whose completion is expected between 2015 and 2019. The details of these investments (a new university complex, the restoration of the most important monuments of the megalithic, Roman and Medieval eras, new infrastructures in support of tourism, and the redevelopment of significant parts of the historic centre) is illustrated in the various sections of this study and shows the image of a city undergoing a profound transformation, which will see cultural activities become the city's primary economic engine. This programme is to the city of Aosta's natural vocation, and that of the region's entire territory, to be the "*Carrefour d'Europe*", a vocation that comes from its unique geographical location and the role that it has historically assumed in allowing the interaction of different cultures and languages, throughout different historical periods.

Aosta is participating in the competition for the title of European Capital of Culture for two reasons:

- 1) To constitute an important example of interaction and integration, sharing of the traditions, languages and cultures that have crossed its territory throughout history, making available this small but significant experience in the long process of European integration, a path that must continue to engage younger generations;
- 2) To reinforce, through this prestigious title, the potential of current investments, making them available to new European generations, for the movement of artists, works and knowledge, as well as projects involving international cooperation.

– *What, for it, would be the main challenge of this nomination? What are the city's objectives for the year in question?*

TRANSLATE INTO ACTION the concepts expressed by the symbolic image of the Aosta 2019 candidacy. In this sense, in interpreting the role of "European Culture Capital" it will provide an opportunity to better express the potential of the city and the territory that will be involved in the initiative, giving full dignity to the natural vocation of "Carrefour d'Europe", or agent acting between people groups and cultures. Aosta is not intended to compete with large numbers realities characterized as metropolitan cities. The difference in size may, however, allow us to take up the role of symbol of border communities.

The Aosta Valley is actually a small and compact system of alpine valleys that converge in a central valley crossed by the Dora and the city of Aosta is its central geographical, political and cultural natural gravity. Alberto Savinio, brother of the famous metaphysical painter Giorgio De Chirico, he attributed the incisive definition of "Aosta city needed." But it could just be that the difference in size may, in the case of Aosta, constitute an added value simply because it allows the visitor to simultaneously appreciate a stratification of attractions ranging from the landscape to the history and the encountering of multifarious cultural expressions.

Rarely, within a limited area (3.263 square kilometres) is it possible to have access to cultural tourism that is so varied and capable of providing multiple "flavours" and aspects. Also - and this is an absolutely unique element within the overall Italian scene - Aosta (around 35,000 inhabitants) is the only city that exists within the region. Recognising the role of capital will therefore result in a positive impact on the whole region and not just on certain areas of it. Aosta - and its Valley - will present themselves, however, at the 2019 appointment after having completely achieved - in accordance with the time schedule for already pre-defined and financed works to be completed - those



urban redevelopment and infrastructure interventions. It will be in a position to present itself to Europe renewed and more open to meetings between people groups.

2.
 — *Explain the concept of the programme which would be launched if the city was nominated European Capital of Culture?*



THE CONCEPTS AT THE base of the Project of Aosta as European Capital of Culture derive from its unique geographical location and historical evolution: **AOSTA IS A CROSSROADS**. A crossroads is a place where two or more roads intersect, a hypothetical junction point where multiple directions flow and unravel. The image of a **CROSSROADS** immediately represents the key concepts of the project: **INTERACTION, INTEGRATION** and **SHARING**.

Aosta is thus a crossroads that includes binomials, trinomials, and a multiplicity of meanings and core values, with moments of lives, characters and the stories of people who intersect in the **HISTORY, CULTURE** and **LANDSCAPE** of the city and the region, meeting in time and space. In this perspective, Aosta's location is truly extraordinary. Indeed, placing the city in a hypothetical European centre, its Cartesian axes, at an incline of 21° to the earth's axis, intersect all European cultures: Italy, the Mediterranean and Latin cultures to the south-east; France, Nordic and English cultures to the north-west; Germany and the eastern cultures of the new European member states to the north-east; Iberian and Franco-Provençal cultures to the south-west. Numerous European capitals and a great many cultural centres are comprised within a radius of less than a thousand kilometres. This European-centric position is neither accidental nor artificial. It is the essence of Aosta, its very DNA. In fact, the Cartesian axes originating from the city's ancient Roman *cardus* and *decumanus* are precisely inclined at 21° to the earth's axis. Is this chance? Destiny? Rather,



it's an opportunity to be seized. Aosta is thus a crossroads of history, an interactive crossroads between peoples, a crossroads of integration between cultures: 21° on the earth's axis and at the centre of Europe.

Aosta is a capital for its history, its culture, and its landscape. Aosta is European for its potential of interaction among peoples, in the integration between peoples, and in the sharing of common values and knowledge.

Aosta. The History of a European Capital

The first human settlements documented with certainty date back to the Neolithic period (third millennium BC) and reveal ethnic and cultural ties between the first inhabitants of Aosta Valley and those of the Swiss Valais.

Numerous archaeological finds confirm continuity of the population during the Bronze Age and Iron Ages.

Penetration of the Celts, between the eighth and fifth centuries together with their integration with the indigenous population gave rise to the Salassians with whom the Romans clashed during the second and first centuries BC during their expansion campaigns into Gaul and Helvetia.

In 25 BC the submission of the Salassians led to the founding of the Augusta Praetoria (modern Aosta) colony, of which there is considerable monumental evidence, and the construction of access roads to the Piccolo and Gran San Bernardo hills. The gradual conversion to Christianity of the region is documented as beginning in the fourth century, by the fifth century Aosta was a bishopric.

Middle Ages

Aosta Valley was fought during the Middle Age between the Goths and the Burgundians, to become part of the kingdom of the Franks in 575. With the dissolution of the Carolingian Empire (888) it was incorporated into the kingdom of



Burgundy. After the fall of the Burgundian dynasty (1032), Aosta Valley was submitted to the House of Savoy, who conceded the Aosta Valley urban and rural communities in 1093 the "Charte des Franchises," which was originally a particularism significant policy, favored by prosperous economic conditions due to businesses across the Alps.

Fundamental protagonist of this period was Saint Anselm of Aosta (1033-1109), a monk, theologian and philosopher, considered one of the greatest performers of medieval Christian thought. He was born in Aosta, in our city and it ripens its vocation in the Benedictine monastery (St. Benin) until the age of 23, to begin with, after the long European journey that would lead to first becoming the first Prior of the Abbey of Bec in Normandy and then Archbishop of Canterbury. From the English city grows, throughout Europe, the "Via Francigena", one of the most important paths of faith, declared "Cultural Route of the Council of Europe" with milestones in the city of Aosta and the rest of the region.

Early modern period

The first half of the sixteenth century was marked by a profound crisis regarding the authority of the dukes of Savoy resulting in the favouring of the development of local political bodies and the emphasising of the political particularity of the region.

The restoration of the monarchy under Duke Emanuele Filiberto of Savoy (1559-1580) started a process of power centralisation in the person of the sovereign (further accentuated by his successors) who became king of Sardinia in 1720. It culminated in 1770 with the repeal of local government bodies.

Between the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries the Valle d'Aosta socio-economic conditions deteriorated. This was mainly due to a decline in trade, epidemics



(in 1630 the plague killed two-thirds of the population) and wars (from the French occupation of 1630 to the Napoleonic campaigns).

Among the characteristic features of the period being considered the following are of note: the development of iron and steel mining (which were not however sufficient to address the shortcomings of the local economy) and the foundation (especially in the second half of the eighteenth century) of a large number of village schools. These contributed significantly to the literacy of the lower classes who each season were often forced to emigrate in order to supplement the meagre incomes from their traditional agropastoral activities.

Contemporary period

Valle d'Aosta was part of the French Empire from 1804 to 1814. This after being occupied in 1796 by revolutionary troops and being incorporated into the French Republic in 1798. With the Congress of Vienna and the restoration of the Savoy monarchy it returned to the setting of the reconstituted Kingdom of Sardinia which in 1861 was transformed into the Kingdom of Italy. Along with this came the annexation of most of the Italian peninsula and the loss of Nice and Savoy which were annexed to France.

During the Risorgimento (Italian unification) and first world wars the toll paid by Valdostani was heavy. The formation of the Italian state involved, for the Valle d'Aosta, the emergence of political and cultural problems, related to its particularism, which worsened during the fascist regime.

In 1945, the liberation from Nazi-fascism resulted in the acquisition by the Italian State of a particular regime of both political and administrative autonomy as set out in constitutional law number 4 dated the 26th of February 1948, with which the Valle d'Aosta Special Statute was



approved. First President has been Federico Chabod (Aosta 1901 – Rome 1960), who can be considered – for his historiographical commitment, his international reputation, as well as his widespread interests – Italy's main historian from the first half of twentieth century. He directed the "Rivista storica italiana", and the School of modern and contemporary history of Rome's University. He's been a member of the "Accademia nazionale dei Lincei", of the British Academy, doctor "honoris causa" from the University of Oxford and Granada, president of the international historians society. The modern and contemporary history library at the University "La Sapienza" in Rome carries his name. He's been a convinced European, and among his many works it has to be remembered "History of the idea of Europe", in which he states "in the formation of the concept of Europe and of the European sentiment, moral and cultural factors have had, in the decisive period of the process, absolute pre-eminence, indeed exclusive.

Aosta encloses within it a synthesis of European history: the dawn of civilization, with its megalithic area, second in importance only to Stonehenge; the first European cultures, with the settlements of the Salassians, a people of Celtic origin; the birth of the Roman Empire, with its perimeter walls and gates, the Arch dedicated to Augustus, the Roman theatre, baths and cryptoporticus, all contributing to making of Augusta Praetoria a miniature of Rome in the heart of the Alps. Aosta's history was also shaped by a political system of feudal towers and castles, stately symbols of power. It encloses Europe's Christian roots, with its roads, trails, churches and resting spots at exactly the middle point along the Via Francigena, between Canterbury and Rome. Aosta marks the birth of modern states with its palaces, institutions and laws linked to the House of Savoy, as well as the spread of the age of enlightenment with the passage of Napoleon.



Industrialisation and progress came with the building of dams, electrical power plants and steel mills, still in existence today. The birth of a free and democratic Europe was won through a fight for liberation from Nazi-Fascism and the enactment of a statute of special autonomy, which recognizes and protects Aosta's linguistic minorities.

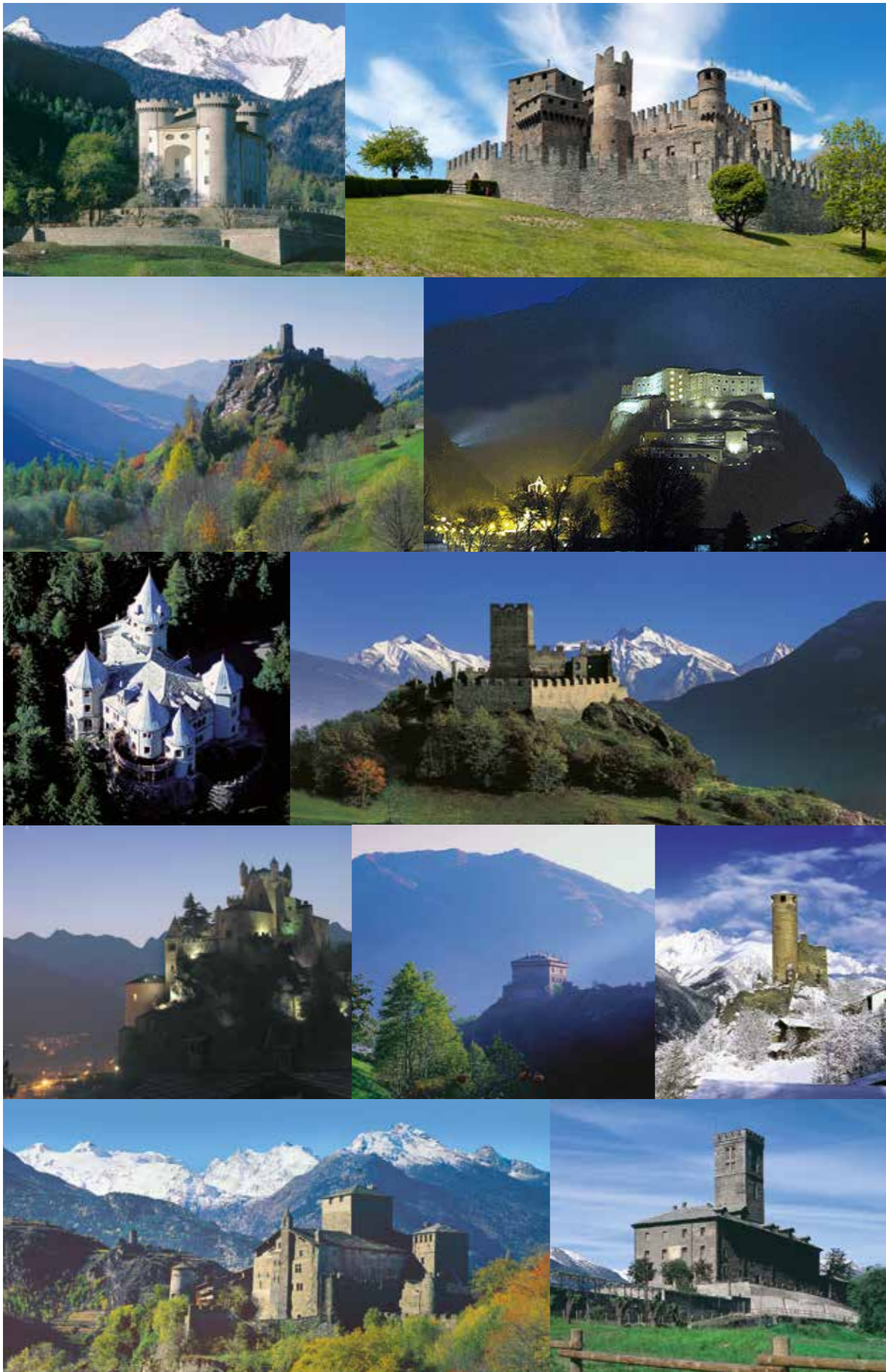
Aosta. The Cultures of a European Capital

Whoever decides to set his senses, mind and imagination on the history and culture of Valle d'Aosta will be able to follow...



The thread of time, drawing upon suggestions from the past and moving along three routes which were already viable in Roman times: the way of the Gauls which stretched out along the bottom of the valley from Pont-Saint-Martin to Aosta or its bifurcations, one in the direction of Alpis Graia (P.S. Bernardo Pass), the other in the direction of the Pennine Alps (G.S. Bernardo Pass). Or, one could explore the famous Via Francigena, more than simply a road it's a patchwork of roads. As defined by experts it's an actual mosaic in that in the Middle Ages it sewed together stretches of Roman roads into an invisible carpet. It was a walkway permeated with spirituality, running from Rome to Canterbury, where each junction signified an average day's walking of around 30-40km. It is interesting to note that Anselmo of Aosta, theologian and philosopher, famous for demonstrating what Kant defined "ontological proof of God", was Archbishop of Canterbury from 1093.

The way of faith. Churches, sanctuaries, chapels and crosses are not only found on the Roman and medieval routes, but are spread out, like a metaphor outlined by spirituality, along secondary roads and paths. They are



explored by pilgrims and elected as places of worship. In each of these, marginal or significant as they may be, products of religious homage to the past reveal themselves and allow themselves to be discovered.

The mark of art. Sacred art in Valle d’Aosta is without doubt overwhelming, even if at times it is mixed in with other sources of inspiration. It is difficult to give a clear, geometric shape to this path, whose life is characterised by discontinuous creative impulses to be seen and approached. The visitor can choose between different forms of expression all to be stored away as emotional memories: biblical scenes mixed together with fantastic figures on the illustrated capitals of the Cloisters of St. Ursus, the Ottonian frescoes of Saint Ursus in the Cathedral of Aosta, the sculpture that makes art from wood in the form statues of saints in the parish museums, the splendour of the goldsmith in the reliquary of Saint Gratus, the “lunette” - half-moon arches, frescoed with scenes of everyday life - in the castle of Issogne. Not to mention all of the collections on display within the various museums.



The “chessboard” of fortifications. Aosta Valley castles are evidence of a particularly rich feudal history and of a suggestive historical continuity: medieval buildings are often built upon previously fortified hills from the Roman era; military bulwarks and the dwellings of noble lords, control points along narrow routes (among the most famous of these are Forte di Bard, the castle of Fénis and the “Baron Gamba” of Châtillon castle, now the seat for an exhibition dedicated to modern and contemporary art featuring more than 1500 works documenting especially Italian figurative production in the second half of the nineteenth century), perimeters and façades of different styles, and suits of armour all of which can be visited. As well as being of cultural interest, they allow one to be

permeated by a magical atmosphere, they are almost like “doors in time” or dimensional gates into the imagination.

Peoples’ culture. Aosta and the Valley of Aosta enclose a unique setting that comprises some of Europe’s most important cultures. Cultures which have been amalgamated over time, and a ‘common awareness’ among its population whose roots are firmly planted in its linguistic diversity, and in its position as a cross-border region, at the periphery of many states yet central to Europe. The notoriety of the Valley of Aosta as a bilingual region (with Italian and French being equally spoken), as recognised by the Italian Constitution, is just one aspect of a far more varied reality, and thus more European. One example is the Walser community in Val del Lys, which speaks a dialect of German origin (Titsch), and the daily usage for the majority of the population of *Patois*, a local dialect belonging to the Franco-Provençal language. Aosta’s historical circumstances are one of its primary features, in both its industrial tradition (Cogne) and vocation to tourism, which for decades have made the region a major destination of migrations from all over Italy, rendering it a truly ‘*Open City*’ for its history and traditions. The region’s tourism is closely linked to its mountain landscapes and rich cultural heritage, which has shaped its citizens and opened the population to exchanges with other peoples, welcoming and indeed inviting contrasts.

Aosta. The Landscape of a European Capital

The Alps in Aosta Valley produce and outline against the sky making it easy to recognise the “Giants of the Alps”: Mont Blanc (4,810m) a mountain carved in granite; the Matterhorn (4,478m), with its iconic pyramid shape, and Monte Rosa (4,634m), the second highest mountain in the Alps; and Gran Paradiso (4,061m), the only “4,000” entirely located on Italian territory.



Views of Aosta Valley have as a background the most impressive mountains of the Alps, peaks well known to mountaineers. But of these magnificent landscapes - made up of glaciers, alpine lakes, protected areas, forests, pastures and traditional villages - one can enjoy both the practising of many different sporting activities, at the highest level, or relaxing in some of the finest holiday resorts that the Alps have to offer.

Speaking of sport, given for granted the amazing variety of opportunities offered by our region both in winter and in summer, we cannot conceal the event that in the four editions held so far has gained a leading role within the regional scene and in the field of “endurance trails”. The **Tor des Giants** is the first race of its kind involving an entire region and the Alte Vie (high ways) of the Valle d’Aosta. A race that is unique and inimitable: 330 km of mountain trails - 24,000 meters of elevation - involving 34 municipalities - 25 mountains in excess of 2,000 metres high - 30 alpine lakes - 2 natural parks - from 300 to 3,300 meters above sea level - 7 base camps - 43 dining locations. The number of participants is also extraordinary with athletes from all over the world participating.

To protect the natural heritage of the rare beauty of the Valle d’Aosta there is also a system of protected areas: 2 parks - the Gran Paradiso national park and the Mont-Avic natural park - 9 nature reserves, 19 sites within the ‘Natura 2000’ ecological network and 4 alpine botanical gardens. The protected areas system for the region comes under the brand name “VIVA, Valle d’Aosta unique in nature,” which, in addition to its natural resources, also underwrites services for the sustainable of eco-tourism: eco-friendly accommodation and tours within protected areas. A unique system enhanced by the excellence represented by the delicious traditional products in the food domain, from



alpine cheeses to sausages, from the tasty honeys to DOC wines, from the spirits to the sweets.

The mountain landscapes and boundary position of the Valley of Aosta evoke wondrously spectacular scenery, both to the eyes of passersby and the more accustomed gaze of its citizens. The area's stunning peaks, along with its valleys, streams and rivers, are an integral part of its cultural heritage, helping explain its origins and influencing its future development. The mountainous terrain, which on the one hand physically divides its people, on the other serves to unite them culturally in a set of common values, becoming a sort of obligatory passage. The culture of mountaineering is one example. The Valley of Aosta's highest peak, the summit of Mont Blanc, is the first to be illuminated by the sun's rays in Europe, a tiny light that step by step radiates across the entire continent.



Ultimately, the image of a CROSSROADS, which is the essence of the city of Aosta, sums up the three concepts at the base of its candidacy project: INTERACTION, INTEGRATION, and SHARING. These concepts envelop a set of social actions and relationships amongst individuals and therefore peoples, which find their place in the HISTORY, CULTURES and LANDSCAPES of the city of Aosta, with together with its regional territory represents a perfect setting. These social actions are also the basis for the progress of European civilization, as it was envisioned by the founding fathers. Social actions which today, and above all tomorrow, take place on the Internet, yet cannot ignore these fundamental concepts: INTERACTION through social media and social networks, a vehicle of cultural and artistic exchange; INTEGRATION through new languages and symbols; SHARING of knowledge and experiences.

Aosta: why capital? Why European?

Because it is a place of **interaction** of **history**, with cultural integration processes and the sharing of values and **assets** and tangible (as well as intangible) fixed assets.

- Roman Age (European roots in the Roman Empire)
- Middle Age (Christian roots of Europe)

interaction ↔ **history**
integration ↔ **cultures**
sharing ↔ **landscape**

Because it lies along the **border** as a place of sharing territory, traditions and languages, and because it reflects an ancient **culture** of mediation, exchange and **integration**.

- linguistic pluralism
- common identity of the territory

Because it's a mountain place. A **culture** of care, monitoring, and respect for **nature**. A vertical landscape that projects upward, then becoming horizontal landscape. A privileged point of view and difficult to reach, **to share**, **to build together** the horizon Europe.

3.
 – *Could this programme be summed up by a slogan? (the answer to this question is optional at the pre-selection stage).*

THE SLOGAN IS A consequence of the visual image imagined for the project. In our view, Aosta 2019 is
“Europe at the centre”,
 which is best described in the path engaged to define its logo.

Giving shape to an institutional image is like ‘giving life’ to something. A visual identity require a background, as well as a history that make it unique. Signs of identity are often already present, we need only find them. They may be a part of the territory, in words handed down to us, or represented in an ancient artifact.

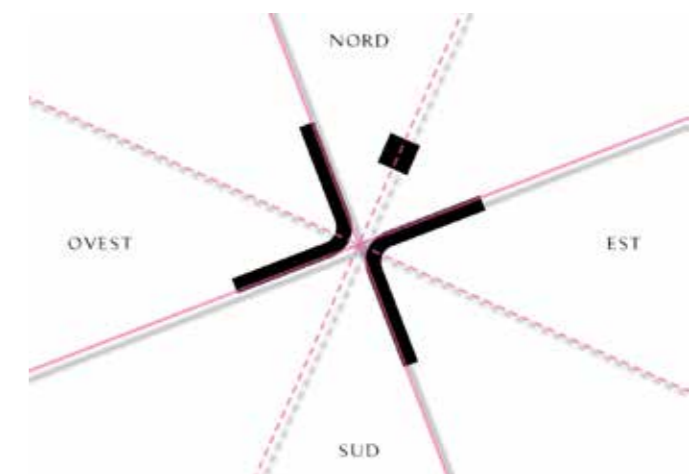
Aosta as a crossroads. Aosta’s strategic location within Europe was decided by history. Defined by the essayist Bernard Janin as the *Carrefour d’Europe*, Aosta and its valley have always constituted important points of communication, from Roman times onwards. Aosta’s history can also be its future. History changes, and today we travel through the sky and on high speed trains – a week point for the valley, as we very well know. Furthermore, the centre of the world in increasingly moving eastwards [although it should be emphasised that this shift is related more to the economy and manufacturing than it is to culture and creativity]. Does this deny the Valley of Aosta’s candidacy? Is Aosta an isolated point that is out of touch with the world?

A crossroads of cultures. The candidacy of Aosta 2019 opposes itself to this possible decadence by presenting a *new centrality*. As a crossroads of roads towards the future, Aosta wants to present itself as a **crossroads of cultures**, preparing Europeans for the challenges of tomorrow and proposing itself to the world as an ideal place for interaction, integration, and the sharing of varied experiences and traditions. A territory where everything is within arm’s length. A place that offers close human relationships. A **vertical landscape** featuring unique natural settings situated a short distance from each other, turning itself into



Europe at the centre.

Aosta: from the crossroads of history to the crossroads of cultures.



a landscape infinitely horizontal. An open workshop on a human scale, where people still find time to reflect and dream of a shared future.

Past and future. The logo for Aosta 2019 originates from these intents. Two orthogonal lines whose point of intersection/crossing is the city of Aosta, the ‘natural centre’ of Europe. To reach the axes of nations from the north, east, south and west, the two lines are set at an incline of 21°. Zooming in, we discover that the angle of the inclination of the city’s Roman Decuman is set at 21° to the earth’s axis. This may be defined as a ‘golden state’, a place of harmony where all things general and particular coincide. A hospitable place, harmonious and easily consumed, an ideal place for interaction, integration and the sharing of Europe’s many cultures and traditions.

Symbol and sign. From the cardinal points, two vectors meet and give rise to a common logos that is born out of this convergence. A shared language that represents the different identities of peoples and preserves their values. The logo for Aosta 2019 symbolically encloses these aspects and interprets these expectations.



4.
— *Which geographical area does the city intend to involve in the “European Capital of Culture” event? Explain this choice.*

5.
— *Please confirm that you have the support of the local and/or regional political authorities.*

THE TERRITORY THAT ASPIRES to the title of “Capital” is the entire autonomous region of Valle d’Aosta. The wealth that Aosta Valley has to offer can be appreciated in fact simply by discovering its entire territory. Each locality is characterised by traditions, customs and different specialities and attractions: this is the “Valle d’Aosta brand”. This is in fact what we want to promote.

Although most of the historical-monumental patrimony is to be found within the city of Aosta, it cannot be ignored by select cultural poles of excellence present within the rest of the territory. Aosta Valley is a land of castles, Forte di Bard is a place of energy and activity, “Baron Gamba” of Châtillon is home to initiatives in the cultural field. If then, as per tradition, culture is in the decline, even linguistically, it is not wrong to say that each municipality within the region is the bearer of its own “baggage”. This is especially true with regard to the Franco-Provençal dialect and not forgetting the peculiarity that exists in the form of the “Walser” minorities. Last but not least, is the fact that the extension to the entire territorial region allows for the “pooling” of institutional partners embracing all of the energy of Aosta Valley within crucial areas giving solidarity to the candidacy project for which, for the most part, there is already a formal manifestation of adhesion and support for the project. To name just a few we have within the Autonomous Region of Valle d’Aosta, the Permanent Council of Local Authorities - whose president is currently the mayor of Aosta and which includes the mayors of 74 Aosta Valley municipalities - the “Forte di Bard” Association, the “Chambre valdôtaine des entreprises et des activités libérales” (the local Chamber of Commerce), and the University of Aosta Valley.

6.
 – *How does the event fit into the long-term cultural development of the city and, where appropriate, of the region?*

CONCERNING RELATIONS with cultural players the content relative to this response is further developed in paragraph 12.

7.
 – *To what extent do you plan to forge links with the other city to be nominated European Capital of Culture?*

AS MORE FULLY described in the section dedicated to candidature “governance” an organising committee charged with looking after the initiative will be formed from among the partners. Within the committee there will be a specific group for discussion and cooperation both with those other candidate cities that pass the pre-selection process and the “European Capital of Culture 2019” in Bulgaria. Of peak importance for the entire period between the candidacy and 2019 will be the coordination of international relations developed over time by the city of Aosta, among which should be noted - for geographic proximity to the European area where the other capital will be located - a twinning with Sinaia in Romania dating back to the late sixties.

8.
 – *Explain how the event could fulfil the criteria listed below. Please substantiate your answer for each of the criteria (this question must be answered in greater detail at the final selection stage).*

As regards “The European Dimension”, how does the city intend to contribute to the following objectives:

- a) to strengthen cooperation between the cultural operators, artists and cities of your country and other Member States, in all cultural sectors;*
- b) to highlight the richness of cultural diversity in Europe;*
- c) to bring the common aspects of European cultures to the fore?*

THE CONCEPTS OF INTERACTION, integration and sharing are the keys to interpreting the history of the city of Aosta, a bilingual and border territory, and the fundamental concepts behind the manifestation proposed for 2019.

Only through the meeting, exchanging and sharing of knowledge will European cultural diversity find common ground. These concepts are well suited to the objective of making major European artistic traditions, but above all innovations, a common heritage.

Aosta can boast a long history of trade and cultural cooperation. Here are some recent examples of city and regional initiatives:

- “Valle d’Aosta University”, which offers a wide range of student exchanges, scientific collaborations and international research projects thanks to numerous agreements with European Institutes;
- “Citadel Youth”, created in 2009 and which has among its most important missions a continuous exchange of young people and planning with the city of Albertville, home of the Winter Olympics in 1992, producing important initiatives in the areas of theatre, musicals, photography and film;
- “Strade del Cinema”, a festival for silent films accompanied by live music, now in its eleventh edition, which for several years has proposed a competition for young European musicians allowing many composers to start a professional career in the film industry;
- “Festival des Peuples minoritaires”;
- “Celtica”, a festival of music, art and Celtic culture which find its originality in cooperating with artistic experience from Britain, Scotland and Galicia;
- “Enfanthéâtre”, an international theatre festival for children, now in its twentieth edition, which includes shows in Italian, French and English.



a) The objective will be implemented by means of:

1) the preparation of joint projects in the field of theatre, music, film, literature and art with those Italian and European cities and regions that have so far collaborated with Aosta and Valle d'Aosta. To these will be added new joint projects currently under development which will involve a large number of member states and in particular Bulgaria. These projects will be especially aimed at young people; 2) the implementation of conventions and European conferences on different topics, such as, for example, education, training, language, federalism, innovation, history, the environment and society. These will be coordinated by the Valle d'Aosta University in collaboration with European universities and various affiliated organisations and local foundations.

b) The objective will be implemented through the organisation of exhibition events, theatre and music festivals, special literary awards, aimed at enhancing differing sensitivities, languages and cultural traditions of member countries.

c) The objective will be implemented paying particular attention to the planning of the meetings which will need to arouse within the participants, spectators and visitors the perception of interaction and integration of cultures and the sharing of common values and knowledge.

— *Can you specify how this event could help to strengthen the city's links with Europe?*

THE SHARING OF PROJECTS with other European cities and regions, such as the organisation of conferences by the University will ensure new partnerships for the city and its cultural institutions and the possibility of continuing with collaborations, the basis of which will be investing in project exchange, but that above all will offer young people artistic and learning experiences within a European context.

Aosta already maintains international relations in the form of a series of agreements signed with various European and extra-European municipalities.

A "Charte de l'Amitié" (friendship charter) was stipulated in 1999 with Albertville, a French border town which was the host for the Winter Olympics in 1992. The relationship was consolidated over time and also gave life - as already mentioned, and subsequently to be considered in greater detail - to a joint project called "Interreg IIIA Alcotra Italia-Francia," which resulted in the creation in Aosta of the 'Cittadella dei Giovani' by means of the redevelopment of the former 'Macello Civico' (which will be one of "incubators" for the initiatives proposed for 2019). The relationship also lives on through constant exchanges between associations belonging to the two cities (particularly in the fields of culture and sport) and with the participation of the municipal administration at the French festival "Le Grand Bivouac", a showcase dedicated to mountaineering and its latest trends.

In 2004 a friendship charter was signed with the Calabrian municipality of San Giorgio Morgeto (in the province of Reggio Calabria). Aosta is also twinned with the town of Narbonne (France), Sinaia (Romania) and Kaolack (Senegal).

Recently (in October 2012), in the context of the visit made by a delegation of Aostan administrators to China,

returning the visit made by the Chinese counterparts to Valle d'Aosta a few months earlier, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed for the development of cultural and tourist relations with the Chinese city of Kaifeng. This relationship will be further consolidated during a visit that the representatives of the Chinese city (4,600,000 inhabitants, in the district of Henan, former capital of the Empire until the Song Dynasty in the eighteenth century) have planned for the beginning of 2014 in order to give the go ahead to the agreement through a series of meetings with various Aostan fabric production, economic and cultural players.

Finally, as a "membre fondateur", Aosta adheres to the 'Association internationale des Maires et responsables des capitales et métropoles partiellement ou entièrement francophones' (AIMF), the association - currently chaired by the Mayor of Paris, Bertrand Delanoë - which brings together mayors of French-speaking cities throughout the world. As part of its membership the City of Aosta has participated in two cooperation projects in Kaolack for the construction of water supply sources and of early medical intervention centres. The participation of Aosta is also constant in the numerous initiatives of the association including the General Assembly which each year deals with a specific topic relating to urban development.

These are bonds that "photograph" the strong projection into Europe of the city of Aosta and its Valley and from which a vocation and an experience of dialogue and relations on the international stage are derived. Since these dynamics are values already acquired by our city and not ground upon which we will be taking our first steps the title of "European Capital of Culture" will give further impetus to the development of links in this sense.

9.
 – *Explain how the event could meet the criteria listed below. Please substantiate your answer for each of the criteria (this question must be answered in greater detail at the final selection stage).*
 As regards "City and Citizens", how does the city intend to ensure that the programme for the event:
 - attracts the interest of the population at European level;
 - encourages the participation of artists, stakeholders in the socio-cultural scene and the inhabitants of the city, its surroundings and the area involved in the programme,
 - is sustainable and an integral part of the long-term cultural and social development of the city?

THE EUROPEAN CAPITAL OF CULTURE 2019
 Project is encapsulated by two strategic policies which are deeply felt and participated in by local institutions, the citizenship and cultural and economic operators:
 1) The rediscovery of the city and its historical evolution, with the objective of making citizens understand the historical value of the place in which they live and the rediscovery of the best corners of the city. This perspective was realised through three projects:
 - *Jolis Coins - Art in the open*: open for a month and likely to be extended in the short term, the "Jolis Coins" project is a sort of open-air museum which seeks to add value to various corners of the city, central but marginal locations for the image that they offer of themselves. Local traditional artists and artisans were invited to "adopt" a site by placing in situ a suitable proprietary work, either by theme or inspiration, regarding the nature of the location: a way to rediscover and give an identity to the many non-places that make up public spaces in order to strengthen a sense of belonging for the inhabitants of the old and new city. The works are temporarily acquired free of charge by the local administration which in return offers a prestigious showcase for the creativity of the artists who are called in person to work towards the improvement of urban aesthetics.
 - *Vieille Aoste*: the recent renewal of road names within the historic centre with the addition of names drawn from ancient road maps while remaining closely linked to reality, to the collective memory and local linguistic heritage, restores the history of the community and texture of the original urban fabric. The new name plates, specially planned and designed to characterise the city in an original and unique way, project to the contemporary world the desire to recuperate traditions:



the choice of steel for the support brackets is a tribute to the centuries-old tradition of the steel industry in the Aosta Valley while the character set, named after its creator “Aosta Capital”, evokes a modern twist to the strict classicism of the Latin America epigraphic script.

- *Augusta Praetoria e Augusta*: attachment and respect for the place where one lives also pass through the knowledge of its history and its evolution. It was proposed in order to help spread this knowledge by means of a three-year exhibition project in the heart of the city aimed at showing and exploring some aspects of urban development in Aosta over the centuries. The large banners hanging under the Hotel de Ville arcades, which were produced by both residents and tourists, come together with the aim of effortlessly reaching a large audience. *Augusta Praetoria e Augusta* are the titles of the two exhibitions undertaken to date which illustrate through the extraordinary works of Francesco Horns, an artist of international renown, the most significant buildings of the Roman and medieval periods Aosta; the last leg of the journey will be dedicated to the future Aosta with modern photographs and renderings of the main interventions that will go towards changing some areas of the city.

2) the need to characterise cultural events and manifestations such that they can become a vehicle for important streams of tourists that can draw upon a wide audience. To this end for some years the city’s cultural players were encouraged to plan quality events with the aim of arousing not only the interest of the citizens but especially that of potential Italian and European tourists, events involving less exploited artistic niches and cultural sectors. Tourist packages have been added to these events with excellent results aimed not only at completing what’s on offer but also at monitoring attendance.



Vieille
AOSTE
Nouvelle
AOSTE

Moreover, there is a coordination and study process in place which is aimed at making traditional Valle d’Aosta tourist attractions such as winter sports and summer mountain tourism a vehicle for the promotion and enjoyment of important cultural sites, exhibitions, festivals and museums.

Based on these experiences the Project for the European Culture Capital:

- must arouse the interest of European citizens, focusing on innovative and unique events that combine the aspirations of the territory and the artistic tastes of the day.

- must start with those local players who in recent years have invested in quality projects, international relations and partnerships with other territories, and arouse the interest of the citizenship with the aim of making it aware of the processes of change taking place in the city and making it see the event as an important moment for revival;

- must continue along the path of valuing and rediscovering history, urban development and the forgotten places of the city and region, thus experiencing a strong thrust towards the future.

With regard to the last two points specific projects will be set up with schools in the city and their foreign partners involving in particular those who will turn 18 in 2019, thus becoming European citizens. The new citizens will thus be the protagonists of the transformation and the strategic objectives of the city.

10.
– How does the city plan to get involved in or create synergies with the cultural activities supported by the European Institutions?

WHEN QUESTIONED ON the matter at the time of “closing” this proposal the regional authorities dealing with relations with the European Union pointed out that for the period 2014/2020 there are still no detailed scenarios regarding possible activities. This is because discussions are still ongoing regarding the EU budget.

For our part it is hard to believe that it will express itself in a timely manner regarding the activities to be undertaken. We prefer here, as stated with regard to the financial aspects of the program, to limit ourselves to emphasising the strong propensity of Aosta towards interacting with cultural activities promoted by European institutions. A willingness demonstrated not only by the role of “Carrefour d’Europe” and the actions already undertaken as highlighted in various parts of this report. This willingness will be translated into reality as soon as possible so as to fully evaluate the 2014/2020 program and the relative opportunities for participation.

11.
– Are some parts of the programme designed for particular target groups (young people, minorities, etc.)? Specify the relevant parts of the programme planned for the event.

THE THEMES OF THE PROJECT are “Interaction”, “Integration” and “Sharing” with the awareness that a policy of inclusion represents our future. In this spirit, Aosta, European Culture Capital 2019 aims to be a meeting place for diversity summarily broken down into its multiform linguistic, cultural, generational, religious, origin and gender expressions. Within this context 360° forms of sharing will be tested that will represent the true legacy of “Aosta 2019”: our guests will discover and assimilate with a deeper understanding that, even when starting from distant points of view, there is always a compromise to be reached and that the possibility of reaching it depends on our ability to be sensitive and open to others. In the light of this suggestion participants at “Aosta 2019” will become “ambassadors” of the world.

12.
– What contacts has the city or the body responsible for preparing the event established, or what contacts does it intend to establish, with:
- cultural operators in the city?
- cultural operators based outside the city?
- cultural operators based outside the country?
Name some operators with whom cooperation is envisaged and specify the type of exchanges in question.
(The answer to this question is optional at the pre-selection stage).

AOSTA VALLEY INSTITUTIONS have always been attentive to proposals from the cultural world. The relationship with industry is therefore widely established and in this case too is marked by a dialogue that goes beyond regional boundaries. There are test initiatives which have carved out positions of prominence such as - to name only a few - the “Festival des Peuples Minoritaires” (designed to facilitate the meeting, discussion and exchange of experiences between different people groups, an expression of minority cultures within Europe and the world which have in common the need to defend their own peculiarities and prerogatives), “Etétrad” (festival of traditional world music in Aosta Valley), “Babel” (the first Festival of the word in Valle d’Aosta, which explores different languages of creativity: from photography to music, theatre, visual arts and film), or “Strade del Cinema” (a manifestation dedicated to live music for silent films).

To be cited apart from the rest, for the variety of the proposal and for the role to be interpreted, we turn then to the “Saison Culturelle.” This is an exhibition that covers the winter and spring periods (roughly from October to June). The edition of the festival which ended this year was the 28th. The events proposed, which take place both in Aosta and the surrounding areas (such as Saint-Vincent), are organised into the sections “Theatre”, “Music”, “Musical & Dance” and “Cinema”. As part of the “Saison Culturelle” some of our most important national level artists have performed in Valle d’Aosta (Luciano Ligabue, Fabrizio De André, Antonello Venditti, Francesco De Gregori, Eugene Kelly, Biagio Antonacci, to name but a few) together with international artists (Chick Corea, Michel Petrucciani and many others), offering to the public unique moments in entertainment.



It would be impossible to continue our journey through the Valley's cultural domain without underlining 'Musicastelle', an international festival devoted to music and entertainment, organized in partnership with Milan's 'Blue Note' club. The festival offers concerts in the most charming sights of the Valley, both on the architectural and landscape sides.

Equally eclectic is the proposal by Aosta Valley in the area of exhibitions. Among those hosted in recent years we cannot overlook the retrospective exhibitions dedicated to Renato Guttuso, Wassily Kandinsky, Giorgio De Chirico, Andy Warhol and "Il ritratto interiore - By Lotto a Pirandello", which has had among its visitors the then President of the Republic, Carlo Azeglio Ciampi. In addition to this calendar we should also emphasize some high level permanent exhibitions such as those of the "Regional Archaeological Museum" (visited by President Napolitano during his official visit to Aosta) or the space devoted to Innocenzo Manzetti within the "Saint-Benin" centre.

A diverse and multi-faceted collection of initiatives from which a constant dialogue with industry players is derived which will be intensified with a view to Aosta 2019 (specific meetings have already taken place in this regard) from the moment that many of the initiatives mentioned here find a natural place in the program to be proposed for the occasion.

To the instances within the city territory there must also be added those of the institutional matrix. Also contributing to the candidacy project for Aosta as European Culture Capital are the Municipal Council for Cultural Activities (an aggregate of the main civic associations active in the field), and the Commission Council which is competent in culture matters and which was made aware right from the early stages of



the application. The application was formalised in a City Council resolution in November 2012 and reiterated (in particular as regards the importance of the opportunity to be seized) by a motion which was unanimously approved last July by the Aosta City Council.

The role of the "Amis de la Vallée d'Aoste" regarding the promotion of the candidacy will be significant. We are talking here about an award established by the Autonomous Region of Valle d'Aosta which is given annually to international personalities who have distinguished themselves for their closeness and friendship with our region. Many of them have already expressed interest and support for the project and will therefore be our important "ambassadors" in the world. It's the case of Evelina Christillin, Paolo Vitelli, Camilla Beria di Argentine, Michel Bouvard, Luigi Roth, Joaquin Navarro-Valls and Giovanni Maria Flick. The President of Italian Republic, Giorgio Napolitano, through the Director of his secretariat, expressed wishes for a "successful conclusion of the project".

Finally, as regards cultural players outside Italy, we can only reaffirm the relationships already in place at an international level with those cities that are twinned or linked with Aosta with friendship cards. These are in fact channels that have already been tested and proven effective for the delivery and organisation of events.

13. — *In what way is the proposed project innovative?*

TECHNOLOGY IS CHANGING human relationships always faster. The transition from the idea of Aosta "physical crossroads" to "cultural crossroads" should not be seen as the transition from real to virtual, but as a virtuous circle, from an old story where the help of new technologies allows to return at the center of interactions between cultures. Today, trade and relationships are established in social networks rather than in reality. And the border / difference

between real and virtual will tend to fade in time.

But paradoxically the younger generations appears increasingly need physical contact and concrete.

Because even if you have 1464 friends on Facebook, you remain alone in front of the screen. Our project aims to create interactive and dynamic web platforms, using social networking strategies, not only for initiatives and projects, but also to encourage meetings between people, professions and trades to join for common objectives and / or share experiences. It would be platforms for knowledge and knowledge that could take the name Diderot 3.0, connected in real time with the territory. An integrated communications system designed then to complete the experiments in different sites, once more between women and men, from Aosta and its region, to Europe and the rest of the world .

14.
— *If the city in question is awarded the title of European Capital of Culture, what would be the medium- and long-term effects of the event from a social, cultural and urban point of view?*
Do the municipal authorities intend to make a public declaration of intent concerning the period following the year of the event?

AOSTA IS AFFECTED by large works that will transform its face and improve at the same time, the quality of life of our citizens and visitors.

The details of these measures are provided in the section of the dossier relating to the “infrastructure of the city.” We must briefly mention them here however since they constitute a natural opportunity for the development and growth of the city which is to be further enhanced by its appointment as European Cultural Capital.

These works are already funded and in the execution phase, for most of them completion is expected by 2019. It is this situation, which will see a radical change in the physiognomy of the city over the next six years and that will push ahead the idea of the candidacy for European Capital. Aosta does not invent anything, does not spend without predicting relapse, but rather offers the European Union the possibility of a natural evaluation of a phase that will remain indelible in the history of the city.

These measures refer essentially to the creation of a new university campus (as a result of conversion - established by an agreement program between the City, the Region and the Ministry of Defence - relating to those areas occupied by the “Testa Fochi” barracks), the construction of a permanent Archaeological Park designed to develop the megalithic area of Saint-Martin-de-Corléans (containing artefacts dating back to prehistoric times second in Europe only to Stonehenge), to the redevelopment of the “Porta Praetoria” (offering it to the visitor in its original majesty and grandeur) and the implementation of a “package” of works and services established by regional law about which it is appropriate to comment here.

The proposal to transform Aosta into the “Capital” of Aostan Autonomy, based on the Government program proposed by the City Council in charge, has found fulfilment in the issuing - as a result of a shared path between the administrations of the city and the region - of a regional law, “Interventions for the development of Aosta capital of Autonomy”, endorsed by the Valley Council on the 14th of November 2011.

With this norm the regional administration, given the interests of the whole Valdostan community regarding the implementation of interventions aimed at qualifying Aostan services and infrastructure, will finance, for a total expenditure of fifteen million Euros during the decade 2012/2021, the implementation of works and activities aimed at economic, social and tourist development within the capital city.

As for the funds allocated to services, which also amount to 15 million Euros during the decade of reference (in “tranches” of €1.5 million per year), they must benefit the entire Aosta Valley community, with particular regard to tourist-sports communities.

The works financed by investments, are instead

summarised by a plan which is also concerted between the two entities and divided into five avenues of action that will be brought to completion in the next few years and that will include: the redevelopment of some of the squares in the old town, the creation of a functional part within the multi-storey car park to be built at the southern entrance to the city (this is with regards to the “PRUSST interscambio Aosta” ministerial program), the restoration of the “porta di ingresso” (main entrance) to the north of the city together with the construction of a roundabout, the redevelopment of the access to the east of the city (via the pedestrianisation of the Arco d’Augusto area) and the redevelopment of the city’s main sports areas.

At the same time and in the same way Aosta and the region as a whole is already living an effervescence life in the cultural and social fields - as given by the proposal of which a part has already been mentioned and which will be further broken down within the section of the report devoted to the structure of the program for the event - that will constitute an applicable heritage for content, quality and resonance during the months of the European Culture Capital and that, on that occasion, will find further enrichment thanks to the additional initiatives planned for the occasion.

Being awarded the title of European Culture Capital will permanently mark this new vocation for the city, a city in which university life, multilingualism, intercultural exchange and artistic creativity will be the engine of economic and social life for all citizens.

The combination of these effects (urban, social and cultural) goes towards the assuming of an entity that makes implicit a declaration of intent for the periods subsequent to the event and that constitutes a legacy that will last over time.

15.
**– *How was this application
 designed and prepared?***

THE CANDIDACY OF AOSTA is the natural consequence of the policies, activities, spirit and traditions that animate our territory. The candidacy was born in the city and immediately gained the backing of local institutions.

Initially proposed by the highest governing body of the city (Municipal Council Resolution 255 of 09/11/2012), it met with the approval of the City Council and was definitively sanctioned by a unanimous resolution in July 2013. The initial work took place through numerous meetings with the relevant council committees.

Concepts, themes and guidelines were developed through different phases of *brainstorming* by the main actors in the city’s cultural life and, surprisingly, came up with same results. This aspect bears witness to the common feeling of a citizenry that knows its own territory, its natural vocation, and its role as a crossroads of Europe.

A first phase of preparation and analysis at the invitation of the Ministry of Cultural Heritage and Decision 1622/2006/EC resulted in the recruitment of sector experts, while the preparation of the dossier drew on voluntary contributions from citizens, politicians, intellectuals, public managers, artists and teachers, in other words those who have animated the cultural life of the city in recent years and shared the strategic decisions described in this dossier. Technical materials, photographs and projects were provided by different sectors of the municipal administration and the Departments of the Autonomous Region of Valle d’Aosta, which participated enthusiastically in the project.

Ultimately, the themes, concepts, aspirations and proposals are nothing more than the result of ten years of work in a territorial area that aspires to become known and to include European citizens in its course.

1.
— *What structure does the city intend to give to the year’s programme if it is designated “European Capital of Culture” (guidelines, general theme of the event)? How long does the programme last?*

2. — *What main events will mark the year?
For each one, please supply the following information: description of the event / date and place / project partners / financing.*

3. — *How does the city plan to choose the projects/events which will constitute the programme for the year?*

THE EVENT PROGRAMME WILL be developed on the basis of three themes that are strongly related to each other – history, cultures and landscape – within which further sub-themes will be listed; in the phase, these are listed below by way of example, and they will become final in the selection phase.

HISTORY: language, spirituality, law, emigration.

CULTURES: visual arts, music, handicrafts, theatre, dance, literature, science and technology.

LANDSCAPE: environment, mountain, sport.

The themes and sub-themes will be the subject of the proposed events. In turn, the events will illustrate the key concepts of the candidacy: interaction, integration and sharing. Set out according to this scheme, the objective of the programme is to arouse in citizens who participate in the event the feeling of being part of a multi-faceted continent that is rich in common values. Unity in diversity.

The programme will start at the end of January 2019 on the occasion of the 100-year-old Foire de Saint-Ours (which traditionally takes place in the historic centre of Aosta on 30 and 31 January), the main and most attended event of the city and the entire region, to end in December with a series of events related to the year-end holidays, focused on enhancing the intra-mountain respite of our reality and, as a consequence, its rich heritage of traditions, history and culture.



1. Organisational structure

1.1— *What kind of structure is envisaged for the organisation responsible for implementing the project? What type of relationship will it have with the city authorities?
(This question must be answered in greater detail at the final selection stage, by enclosing in particular the statutes of the organisation, its staff numbers, the curricula vitae of those primarily responsible, information concerning its financial and management capacity, and a graph of the structure with comments on the respective responsibilities of the different levels).*

1.2 — *If an area around the city is involved in the event, how will the coordination between the authorities of the relevant local and regional authorities be organised?*

IT IS PLANNED TO SET UP an organising committee called “Aosta 2019”, chaired by the mayor of the city and comprising representatives of all institutional or other partners that support the project. The task of this body will be to express all the directions (and define strategies) related to Aosta 2019. For this reason, it may organise its activities in “Sections”, which will go into specific aspects in depth (like the already stated aspect of international relations), and benefit from the intervention and collaboration of leading figures from the cultural world, which may, in turn, lead to the setting up of a Scientific Committee to support the artistic direction of the event and the design and monitoring of programme events.

The implementation phase of the guidelines and strategies will be entrusted to a special purpose entity that it is intended to set up for the occasion, and whose members will be the bodies and organisations that support the “Aosta 2019” project from the operational and management points of view. Each of the future members will pay its quota of the share capital in order to begin work immediately, pending the arrival of funding planned for the project.

THE CHARACTERISTICS OF the organisational/managerial model proposed in the previous point respond to the need and objective of coordination among the different institutional levels of the territorial area involved in the initiative.

1.3 — According to which criteria and under which arrangements has or will the artistic director of the event been chosen? What is or will be his/her profile? When will he/she take up the appointment? What will be his/her field of action? (This question must be answered in greater detail at the final selection stage).

THE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR will be officially appointed by the Organising Committee, and must be a professional figure with proven experience in the organisation and management of major cultural events, with a capacity for coordinating various operational and administrative aspects. The appointment of the Artistic Director, together with the selection criteria and procedure, will be managed by the Organising Committee, and must take into consideration administrative abilities, consulting and guidance capacities, organisational and coordination skills, and responsibility for oversight and management, particularly with regard to the monitoring and achievement of objectives.

The Artistic Director will be appointed after the formal establishment of the Organising Committee, at such time as when the appointment becomes necessary.

2. Financing of the event

GIVEN THAT THE CANDIDACY involves the entire region, and the fact that many regional cultural centres are in the city, also with a view to reiterating how this project is linked to the “Valle d’Aosta brand” in its entirety, the data on investments are presented here by adding to the balance sheet items of the City of Aosta those of the Autonomous Region of Valle d’Aosta which, together with the Municipality, is the public body that invests most in the capital of Valle d’Aosta. In fact, it is only in this way that these can become really indicative of the scope of the operation emanating from our territory. Finally, it should be noted how the tables below are related to works and interventions that fall outside the concept of routine or extraordinary maintenance, but focus on the work of redevelopment and on all those actions that authentically interpret the spirit of the competition.

In terms of economic resources, some specific comments must be dedicated to EU funding. In this pre-selection phase, it has been decided to conservatively calculate only the amount of the “Melina Mercouri” prize. As regards additional EU funding, given that this is still being finalised for the 2014-2020 period, even though Aosta is determined to pursue this possibility with conviction, at the moment it is not plausible to indicate details of the amounts. We will indicate these in later dossiers.

On the whole, it should be noted that, despite the period of crisis, with diminutions of budget that have almost reached zero level in some cases, Valle d’Aosta and the Municipality of Aosta have continued to earmark decent appropriations for tourism and culture, in the knowledge that these sectors are critical areas for our future. We have embarked on a European journey through vocation and conviction, and we continue to follow it. This does not make our territory “dead weight” from the economic point of view, so much so that – as will be developed later – it is not considered necessary to apply to the State for specific funding for the proposed programme. The works listed in various capacities in the dossier will be carried out in any case, even if Aosta is not awarded the title of “European Capital of Culture”. However, receiving that award would make it possible to give a different dimension to the outcome of our journey, further extending the respite.

2.1 — What has been the usual annual budget for culture in the city over the last 5 years (excluding expenditure for the present ECoC application)?

Year	Usual annual budget for culture in the city (in euros)	Usual annual budget for culture in the city (in % of the total annual budget for the city)
-4	4.005.005,11	4,85%
-3	6.045.437,24	9,39%
-2	5.643.126,67	8,27%
-1	6.843.934,09	9,61%
current	5.093.380,49	6,94%

*While for the years 2009-2012 the data relate to the commitments made in financial statements, for the current year were considered the initial budget appropriations.

** The data reported in the tables refer to both the current and the capital expenditures of the budget of the organization.

Based on what is stated in the introduction of Section 2, we summarize below the funding that the Autonomous Region of Aosta Valley has allocated to the tourism industry and culture (current expenditure and capital expenditure) over the 2008-2013 period.

Department	Global amount (in euros)
Tourism Department	255.487.000,00
Department of Superintendence for Cultural Heritage and Activities	200.000.000,0v0

A particular mention is due - related to their impact on this dossier - for the funding of the following works:

Project	Size of the investment (amounts in millions of euros)	Amount already committed (in millions of euros)
University	134,1	67,9
Airport	26,3	17,1
Megalithic Area	45,0	26
Qualification of Porta praetoria	2,7	1,2

2.2 — Please explain the overall budget for the European Capital of Culture project (i.e. funds that are specifically set aside for the project). Please fill in the tables below.

Total expenditure (in euros) in the budget	Operating expenditure (in euros)	Operating expenditure (in %)	Capital expenditures (in euros)	Capital expenditures (in %)
293.997.339,00	65.200.000	22,18%	228.797.339,00	77,82%

* As already outlined in previous sections of this dossier, the candidature of the city will involve the entire Aosta Valley system, also from the financial point of view.

The estimated budget for the project takes therefore into account the trend of investment (both in the current and capital account) that all partners of the event ordinarily devote to the cultural sector and that in the years covered by the program / project implementation application, will contribute, as a natural consequence, to support the same.

Should also be borne in mind that the “capital expenditures” shows the substantial public investment (airport, new university, megalithic area, redevelopment Porta Praetoria) which, completed in 2019, will contribute significantly to making Aosta city even more open to Europe.

[In case the city is planning to use funds from the usual annual budget for culture to cofinance the ECoC project, please indicate the amount which will be taken from the usual annual budget for culture from the year of the submission of the bid to the ECoC year included : Euros]

Year	Amount
2013	3.200.000,00
2014	3.700.000,00
2015	5.000.000,00
2016	7.000.000,00
2017	7.000.000,00
2018	7.000.000,00
2019	7.000.000,00

Total income in the budget (in euros)	From the public sector (in euros)	From the public sector (in %)	From the private sector (in euros)	From the private sector (in%)
286.497.339,00*	273.457.339,0	95,5%	13.040.000,00	4,5%
*The difference between the total revenue (286,497,339.00 euros) and total charges (293,997,339.00 euros) is due to the different time period in which it is required by the module to consider the same because the revenues do not include the period following the year ECoC.				

Income from the public sector	in euros	in %	Please specify: amount planned (p), secured (s).
National government	0	0	0
City	39.697.339,00	14,5%	21.697.339,00 s 18.000.000,00 p
Region	231.760.000,00	84,7%	112.200.000 s 119.560.000 p
EU	1.500.000,00	0,54%	1.500.000,00 s
Other	500.000,00	0,26%	500.000,00 p

2.3 – Please explain the operating budget for the ECoC project. Please fill in the tables below.

a) Overall operating expenditure:

Operating expenditure (in euros)	Programme expenditure (in euros)	Programme expenditure (in %)	Promotion and marketing (in euros)
65.200,00	42.980.000,00	65,92%	9.955.000,00

Promotion and marketing (in %)	Wages, overhead, administration (in euros)	Wages, overhead, administration (in %)
15,27%	12.265.000,00	18,81%

b) Planned timetable for spending operating expenditure::

Timetable for spending	Programme expenditure (ineuros)	Programme expenditure (in%)	Marketing and promotion expenditure (in euros)	Marketing and promotion expenditure (in %)	Wages, overhead, administration (in euros)	Wages, overhead, administration (in %)
2014	455.000,00	65%	105.000,00	15%	140.000,00	20%
2015	975.000,00	65%	225.000,00	15%	300.000,00	20%
2016	1.950.000,00	65%	400.000,00	15%	650.000,00	20%
2017	4.875.000,00	65%	1.125.000,00	15%	1.500.000,00	20%
2018	9.750.000,00	65%	2.250.000,00	15%	3.000.000,00	20%
2019	19.500.000,00	65%	4.500.000,00	15%	6.000.000,00	20%
2020	4.200.000,00	70%	1.200.000,00	20%	600.000,00	10%
2021	1.275.000,00	85%	150.000,00	10%	75.000,00	5%

2.4 – Overall capital expenditure:

Capital expenditures (in euros)	Funding of new cultural infrastructure or upgrading existing facilities (including museums, galleries, theatres, concert halls, arts centres etc) (in euros)	Urban revitalisation (renovation of squares, gardens, streets, public space development etc) (in euros)	Infrastructures (investment in the underground, rail stations, dockyards, roads etc) (in euros)
228.797.339,00	181.800.000,00	20.697.339,00	26.300.000,00

2.5 — Have the public finance authorities (city, region, State) already voted on or made financial commitments? If not, when will they do so?

THE ADOPTION OF FORMAL commitments will become concrete during the course of the pre-selection stage, later reaching the levels of certainty appropriate to the project's complexity during the final selection phase.

2.6 — What is the plan for involving sponsors in the event?

THE STUDY PLAN for sponsorships will be drafted and submitted by the Organizing Committee when the application will have acquired the necessary credibility, passing the pre-selection phase.

In this context, and by virtue of the expected positive impact the awarding of the title of European Capital of Culture will have on the region and the city, local businesses and banking foundations will step in to play a prominent role, as they have long standing relationships and have a history of financing cultural events promoted by both the local authorities and regional administration.

Based on this consolidated experience, and taking into consideration the current difficult economic circumstances, we can likely assume the direct participation of businesses and foundations in the event's financing, or through alternative forms of sponsorship, often used in such contexts.

Specifically, the region of the Valley of Aosta comprises many companies acting as subsidiaries, directly associated or affiliated with public organisms, which are promoters of the candidacy (in particular, the Autonomous Region of Valle d'Aosta); noteworthy among these are the Casino de la Vallée, a traditional partner of multiple cultural events, and various companies operating in the hydropower production sector.

The Valley of Aosta's vicinity to the highly industrialised areas of northern Italy, which will be targeted by a specific communication plan aimed at attracting consistent tourist flows, and the interest the European Capital of Culture will potentially arouse in terms of direct and indirect economic returns over an broad territory, is an element that ensures private participation in the event's financing.

Alongside such initiatives of a more consistent nature, all interested private entities and businesses will be given the possibility of participating in the realisation of events and projects, in accordance with principles of transparency and reciprocity.

The Organising Committee will collectively involve all potential sponsors, whether public or private, illustrating the project in detail and highlighting its potential, in an effort to bring together the various players involved and provide a platform that enhances their conviction to invest in the initiative.

2.8 — Which amount of the usual overall annual budget does the city intend to spend for culture after the ECoC year (in euros and in % of the overall annual budget)?

Amount to spend for culture after the ECoC year	% on the year overall annual budget
6.000.000,00	8,00%

1.
— *What are the city's assets in terms of accessibility (regional, national and international transport)?*

STRATEGICALLY SITUATED at the confluence of the routes through the Great St. Bernard Pass to Switzerland, the upper Valle d'Aosta and the Little St. Bernard Pass towards France, and the lower Valle d'Aosta towards Piedmont, the city of Aosta is the main transport network hub of the Autonomous Region of Valle d'Aosta.

The city has a railway station in the city centre connected through an underpass to parking spaces just a 5-minute walk from the heart of the capital of the Aosta Valley and the departure station of the Aosta-Pila cableway that leads directly to the ski slopes of the popular holiday resort overlooking the plain of Aosta in 17 minutes.

In addition, about 100 metres from the railway station there is a modern bus station that is a point of departure and arrival for buses connecting Aosta with all the towns and valleys of the region. There is an underground multi-storey car park for 365 vehicles in the vicinity of the bus station.

RAIL LINKS

The two railway lines that exist in Valle d'Aosta depart from the Aosta station: the Aosta-Chivasso-Turin line leading south to Piedmont and the Aosta-Pré-Saint-Didier line leading to the upper Valley towards Mont Blanc.

The Aosta/Turin stretch has a length of 129 km, and is diesel-powered for the Aosta/Ivrea stretch and electric-powered for the Ivrea/Turin stretch. Each day there are overall 17 pairs of trains Aosta/Turin or vice versa (working days), for a total of 1,570,000 train/km annually and around 5,000 travellers each day. Chivasso station is the changing point for travellers who wish to continue their journey towards Milan.

The Aosta/Pré-Saint-Didier stretch is 31 km long and is diesel-powered. Each day there are 12 pairs of trains,

for a distance of 275,000 train/km annually km per year and 664 travellers/day (332 in each direction).

Recently, Decree Law 69 of 21 June 2013 (the so-called "Decree of Doing"), converted with modifications into Law 98/2013, has provided for a number of fundable interventions for completion of infrastructure of national strategic importance under construction, upgrading of nodes and the standard of interoperability of European corridors, and improvement of network performance and railway services, including the **functional rail link between the Piedmont Region and Valle d'Aosta** in order to modernise the stretch.

AIR LINKS

The "Corrado Gex" regional airport lies on the outskirts of Aosta in the municipality of Saint-Christophe. Active since 1959, the only airport in the Aosta Valley has undergone major modernisation works in recent years, carried out by the Regional Administration.

The airport, whose owner as well as funder is the Autonomous Region of Valle d'Aosta, was opened to national and international air traffic in November 1995, and it handles both commercial and tourist-sport (general aviation) activities.

The airport has been strengthened considerably and is still being expanded. These activities are now nearing completion, with the construction of the new passenger terminal. In particular, in December 2005, works were funded on runway lengthening (from 1,240 to 1,499 metres to allow take-off and landing of larger aircraft, up to a maximum of 70/80 seats) and the installation of radio assistance devices, in order to allow the use of the airport outside daytime time slots and in weather conditions of limited visibility.

Through a second intervention, works were funded for construction of the new passenger terminal, parking for cars, buses and aircraft, and access roads, in order to upgrade the airport with respect to the potential of the new runway. Construction of the new terminal began in August 2010 and is currently under way.

In addition to activities strictly related to the airport, reorganisation of the road system outside the airport was also carried out.

Pending completion of the works, the “Gex” airport will continue to operate as a domestic airport. On July 12, the ENAC (National Civil Aviation Authority) notified the Autonomous Region of Valle d’Aosta that the Swiss airline company “Darwin Airlines SA” had won the European tender for the scheduled air service on the Aosta-Rome route and vice versa.

COURMAYEUR-AOSTA-TURIN MOTORWAY

In an intervention of great importance for the opening of the Valle d’Aosta to tourist and commercial traffic and the socio-economic development of the region, the A5 motorway that connects Aosta to Turin was completed in successive phases in the 1960s. The stretch Turin - Ivrea - Quincinetto (a Canavese town bordering the Alps) was opened in May 1961 after three years of work, which began in February 1958, while the Aosta Valley stretch between the regional capital and Quincinetto was opened for circulation between 1967 and 1970.

In 1983, the Raccordo Autostradale Valle d’Aosta S.p.A. (RAV) company, a concessionary of the Autostrade per l’Italia Group, was formed to design, implement and manage the Aosta Bypass System and the stretch between the city of Aosta and the Mont Blanc Tunnel. By virtue of this agreement, the Aosta

East - Morgex trunk was opened in 1994, the Morgex - Courmayeur trunk on 29 June 2001, and the Courmayeur - Entrèves trunk in 2007.

The last toll booth in Italian territory is that of Courmayeur, although the motorway continues through the long Dolonne tunnel, opened in March 2007, up to Entrèves. Here it joins the SS 26 highway which, passing near the hamlet of La Palud in Courmayeur, leads to the Mont Blanc Tunnel.

In addition, 1997 and 2001 saw the opening in two tranches of the A5/SS27 Great St. Bernard Slip Road, which is convenient for reaching the SS 27 towards the Great St. Bernard Tunnel that connects the Valle d’Aosta with Switzerland, directly from the A5, without crossing the town of Aosta.

The distance between Aosta and Turin is 101 km, while Aosta is 40 km from the Italian border.

Finally, the A5 is connected to the A4 Turin-Milan-Trieste motorway through the Ivrea-Santhià Slip Road. Through this “slip”, Valle d’Aosta is conveniently connected at motorway level (and without the need for stops at intermediate barriers) with the cities of Milan (distance from Aosta 185 km), Genoa (246 km) and Bologna (415 km), to mention only the main connections.

MONT BLANC TUNNEL

A communication pathway of great symbolic significance, as well as of great economic and social importance, the Mont Blanc Tunnel connects Italy and France under the 4,810 metres of the highest peak in the Alps

Through the connection opened in 1965 that put an end to the isolation of Valle d’Aosta, reuniting fraternal peoples throughout the Alps, the Alpine region “came

closer” to the rest of Europe, and is now 87 km from Geneva, 222 km from Lyon and 612 km from Paris.

The tunnel also plays a key role in promoting the development of tourism and trade between the valleys of Courmayeur and Chamonix, the two famous cross-border resorts of Valdigne and the French department of Upper Savoy, which welcome the visitors from the tunnel that connects the Valle d’Aosta with the Rhône-Alpes region.

The entrance plaza in Valle d’Aosta is located 1,381 metres above sea level, while the plaza on the French side is at 1,274 metres. The tunnel is 11.6 km in length.

Management of the tunnel has been assigned to GEIE-TMB, under the control and supervision of Italian and French ministerial committees.

The tunnel now has a Centralised Technical Management (CTM) system, a computer system that permanently controls and monitors the entire length of the tunnel and processes data from more than 35 thousand control points. It is able to detect any anomaly and propose the scenario that allows the operator to use the proper signalling, adjust the ventilation, inform users (FM radio, variable message panels), alert the rescue services, and alert and communicate with external interveners.

The complex safety system consists of 37 shelters, a pure air channel connected with safe places for the evacuation of users, 116 SOS niches, 120 cameras, 40 semi-barriers each associated with a variable message panel and a red traffic light, 20 variable message panels arranged in turn, 20 traffic lights per direction, a thermometric cable equipped with 3,860 sensors, 78 fire niches, 116 fume suction inlets, 76 air accelerators positioned in turn, 10 speed control radars and the same for distance between vehicles, 36 emergency stopping



areas, a central location for immediate intervention and two external locations.

Because of the stringent traffic circulation regulations inside the tunnel, in particular as far as maximum permitted speed is concerned, the crossing time is 12 minutes at 60 km/h.

GREAT SAINT BERNARD TUNNEL

From Aosta, main road 27 branches off and after 34 km leads to the Great St. Bernard Pass, on the border of Italy with Switzerland – a pass that has been known and used since ancient times. A few miles earlier, lies the entrance in Italian territory to the Great S. Bernard Tunnel that connects the Valle d’Aosta with the Swiss canton of Valais.

The tunnel, which was opened on 19 March 1964, was the first road tunnel opened to traffic through the Alps. The tunnel is 5,798 metres long. The south entrance on the Italian side is located at Saint-Rhémy-en-Bosses at 1,875 metres above sea level, the north entrance on the Swiss side is at Bourg-Saint-Pierre, at 1,918 metres above sea level. Management of plant and traffic is carried out in two Control Rooms located in respective stations at the entrances to the tunnel. A remote cutting edge control system has made plant and traffic management safer and more reliable.

At the end of 2010, work started on construction of a service and safety tunnel, measuring 4.30 metres in diameter.

2. – *What is the city’s absorption capacity in terms of tourist accommodation?*

CONSIDERING THE REDUCED SIZE of Aosta Valley, along with the need to put up a « network » made of all the actors in the regional domain, in order to face the challenge to be “Europe’s Culture Capital” candidate, the local hospitality system will be presented by a table not referring only to the town, but to the whole region. The goal is to give an overview, as complete as possible, of the different staying options that a visitor of Aosta Valley is offered.

Tourist facilities	AOSTA			AOSTA VALLEY		
	Facilities	Bedrooms	Beds	Facilities	Bedrooms	Beds
Hotels	21	560	1086	395	9349	18213
Tourist-Hotel Residences	2	17	45	66	1330	4426
Overall	23	577	1131	461	10679	22639
Guest houses	5	26	46	117	630	1299
Farm holidays	3	11	40	43	214	510
Rest areas	1	0	140	20	0	2792
Bed & Breakfast	14	27	56	153	308	677
Campings	2	-	160	45	89	14012
Social campings	-	-	-	1	0	110
Houses and apartments	-	-	-	40	327	1141
Holiday homes	-	-	-	75	1095	3733
Youth Hostels	-	-	-	11	122	535
Stopping places / Dortoir	-	-	-	18	58	221
Mountain refuges	-	-	-	56	492	3307
Holiday villages	-	-	-	1	60	684
Overall	25	64	442	580	3395	29021

Data updated at 31st August 2013

To offer a more complete information on the tourism system of Aosta and its Valley, please refer to the following tables (optionals), concerning tourism income in Aosta, and in the whole region, in 2012 and in the first six month of 2013, divided by hosting structure.

Tourist flows	2012		2013 (JANUARY - JUNE)	
	Arrivals	Nights spent	Arrivals	Nights spent
AOSTA				
Hotels	-	-	-	-
Tourist-Hotel Residences	-	-	-	-
Overall	78.459	156.214	37.445	76.299
Guest houses	954	2.181	537	1.195
Farm holidays	545	2.759	146	314
Bed & Breakfast	458	1.038	181	315
Overall	1.957	5.978	864	1.824
Motorhome areas	-	-	-	-
Campings	-	-	-	-
Overall	3.914	6.795	1.530	2.116
AOSTA VALLEY				
Guest houses	32.500	78.865	14.333	36.048
Farm holidays	12.093	30.965	4.719	10.131
Hotels	633.958	1.958.645	289.862	932.605
Rest areas	46.668	64.945	8.853	14.985
Bed & Breakfast	10.339	23.574	4.153	8.422
Campings	66.488	293.574	11.631	36.376
Social campings	3.230	21.495	288	3.770
Houses and apartments	8.088	58.626	3.004	17.928
Holiday homes	34.602	180.989	10.572	38.778
Youth hostels	9.645	24.993	4.579	8.536
Stopping places / Dortoir	1.916	3.864	650	1.617
Tourist-hotel Residences	69.976	331.794	35.970	161.305
Mountain refuges	80.375	93.926	13.969	19.358
Overall	1.009.878	3.166.255	402.583	1.289.859

3.
 – *What projects are to be carried out between now and the year for which the city is applying for the title of European Capital of Culture in terms of urban and tourism infrastructure, including renovation? What is the planned timetable for this work? (The answer to this question is optional at the pre-selection stage)*

NO CONSIDERATION of a design nature regarding the implementation of future interventions on the territory can avoid taking into account the current and persistent framework of economic difficulties faced by Italy as a whole, starting with central government and continuing with the regions and local authorities.

As regards the current municipal administration, which took office in May 2010, the political-economic framework of reference has necessarily influenced realisation of the objectives set by the Government Programme approved on 16 June 2010 by the City Council, which contained the provision for a system of infrastructure, the so-called “Major Works”, to be implemented in synergy with the Administration of the Autonomous Region of Valle d’Aosta as a qualifying factor in a process of recognition of the importance of Aosta within the region.

However, despite the economic “revolution” that has taken place in the last three years in our country (as well as in the rest of Europe and worldwide) and the consequent need to revise some priorities, the Administration has confirmed its adherence to the Government Programme presented to the citizens of the regional capital, respecting the popular will expressed through the vote of May 2010.

MAJOR WORKS

In particular, with regard to the “Major Works”, in addition to arrangement of the area south of Aosta, with the expected construction of a new headquarters for the offices of the Autonomous Region, the start of the district heating network project in the city area and the expansion of the “Umberto Parini” regional hospital, the key element in terms of importance and impact on the socio-economic fabric of the city lies in the process of conversion of the former “Testa Fochi” Alpine troops

barracks, located on the edge of the historical centre of Aosta, in the university centre designated to accommodate the new seat of the University of Valle d'Aosta.

NEW UNIVERSITY CENTRE

Founded in 2000, the University of Valle d'Aosta is a centre of education and research with an open look towards Europe and constant attention to the territorial area within which it stands.

The development project for the University, started in 1997, stemmed from the need to make high-level and continuously updated training available to everyone and the desire to create a structure of production and dissemination of knowledge, a body for discussion and social, cultural and economic growth and, therefore, the development of a regional global system.

Thirteen years after its foundation, the educational offer of the University has grown and it now has degree courses in 5 faculties with about 1,200 students. The educational project that characterised the University of Valle d'Aosta from the outset is based on the centrality of the student: the small size of the University, compared with other universities, permits a direct relationship with professors and easy access to services, as well as facilitating dialogue with other students. Its international opening, demonstrated by the numerous agreements with institutions in Europe, translates into numerous possibilities for student exchanges, academic collaboration and international research projects.

In addition to promoting the training of young people from the Aosta Valley and the qualification of local professionals, the University aims to attract an increasing number of students from all Italian regions, in order to create a community of learners fostering a fruitful cultural exchange. This aim is facilitated by a frame of reference of



exception: the Valle d'Aosta has a rich natural, historical and artistic heritage, as well as many sporting attractions, both during the summer and winter.

The new site intended to accommodate the regional university centre is part of an important and neuralgic strip of urban territory in the city of Aosta, hinged between the old town bordered by the Roman wall and the expansion area of the city (Cogne district) to the west; it has the shape of an elongated rectangle with a surface area of about 25,000 m² and, given that it is a military area that has not been decommissioned, completely delimited by a high fence hiding it.

The building complex, called "Caserma Testa Fochi", features four buildings of a certain significance that form a "square" delimiting Piazza d'Armi, the oldest of which dates back to 1886-1887.

The reconversion project – which derives conceptually from the model of "Campus" university and therefore of an "open" settlement – makes the area permeable to pedestrian mobility, inserting, in direct connection with the former parade ground, functions and services (assembly hall, café, shops) that are available to students and citizens. The role of the new architecture will be to organise and characterise the spaces, giving the city a place of great urban quality, respecting the collective memory and the most significant pre-existing memories that should not only be conserved but also enhanced (such as the sacrarium of the Alpine Battalion "Aosta", a gold medal for military valor).

At "macro" level, the proposal emphasises organisation by functions. Each building is therefore equipped with its own functional autonomy, with specific use, designed to avoid the generation of overlapping functions that are not particularly compatible and, at the same time, ensure the flexibility of the buildings



for possible future expansion.

The entire complex has been sized and structured in close relation with the needs expressed by the University of Valle d'Aosta (objective declared as optimal: 2,000 students) which has seen a significant growth in enrolment in its courses and degrees, and sets the objective of implementing its training offer increasingly as a micro-university of the latest generation, able to relate itself effectively with all that is the most advanced on offer on the national and international scene.

The design "team" is coordinated by the architect Mario Cucinella of Bologna, a prominent figure in contemporary architecture, whose signature style is marked by the lightness and transparency of shapes and materials, combined with a rigorous search for energy efficiency and environmental sustainability. The beginning of works is planned for March 2014.

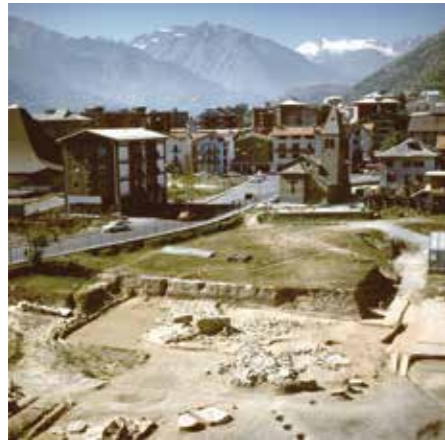
The project for the new seat of the Valle d'Aosta University was presented in March 2011 by architect Cucinella at "Eco-Build", the most important event on eco-sustainability in the construction industry, which was held in London.

A first model of the project, complete with graphics, was presented in the Valle d'Aosta pavilion on the occasion of the celebration of the sesquicentennial of the Unification of Italy in Rome.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL PARK IN THE MEGALITHIC AREA OF SAINT-MARTIN

Another work of great importance for the city is that which concerns its western part, with the construction of an archaeological park in the megalithic area of Saint-Martin-de-Corléans.

It is a large area of about 10,000 m² accidentally discovered in 1969 during excavations for the

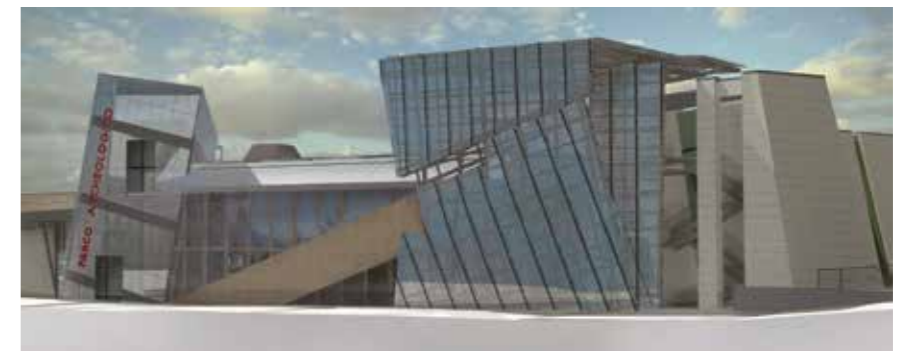


foundations of some apartment buildings that were to have risen to the east of the district's mediaeval church.

After acquisition of the land, the archaeological excavations were conducted until the prehistoric monuments were completely uncovered, permitting identification of a megalithic complex of extraordinary importance at international level, in which it was possible to identify six distinct historical phases: Phase I (3000-2750 BC) with alignment of holes for totem poles; Phase II (2800-2750 BC), characterised by a large rectangular area as a sacred area with ritual crossed ploughing and alignments for more than 40 anthropomorphous stele up to 3 metres in height; Phase III (2700-2300 BC) with alignment of ritual wells in which millstones and wheat seeds were placed, often mixed with pebbles and lithic flakes; Phase IV (2300-200 BC) with dolmen tombs; Phase V (2100-1900 BC) characterised by megalithic tombs; and Phase VI (around 1100 BC) with a final Bronze Age wall.

The enhancement project called for the opening of an archaeological park museum in the megalithic area currently under construction (construction work that began in 2006 is currently being completed), designed to fulfil functions of different degrees, addressing the primary objective of protecting and enhancing finds preserved on site, and a fundamental part of the cultural heritage of Valle d'Aosta.

Because of the singularity of the archaeological remains found on site, the museum will have the crucial task of protecting the archaeological site, enabling effective enjoyment by the public, encouraging the development of exchanges and a network among museums and cultural institutions dedicated to megalithic structures, and increasing the process of democratisation of culture through initiatives to



enhance and promote heritage, such as educational and promotional activities, shows and exhibitions.

The most characteristic features will be the 3,200 m² museum and an area of over 4,000 m² with the finds inserted in their context of origin accompanied by the relevant visitors' routes. An area will be dedicated to a study and documentation centre on Alpine megalithic art, with an archive and specialised library, from which it will be possible to dialogue and interact with specialists and similar sites in Aosta to address scientific topics concerning the sector. There will also be rooms equipped for meetings and conferences to promote cultural tourism, including at congressional level.

Finally, a square with a surface area of 3,000 m² will be constructed over the great nave, destined to become a meeting point for social gatherings where citizens will be able to organise cultural or other events, surrounded by shops and stores that will complement the offer of the archaeological complex, together with a library, café, restaurant, and car parks to the east and west of the complex.

ENHANCEMENT AND CONSERVATION OF PORTA PRAETORIA

Remaining in the sphere of enhancement of archaeological heritage, in 2008 the Regional Superintendent for Heritage and Cultural Activities launched another significant project that concerns Porta Praetoria, one of the most prestigious monumental legacies of the Roman foundation of the city, the ancient Augusta Praetoria, built in 25 BC. after the defeat of the Salassians by Terentius Varro.

The gate, located in the eastern part of the walls, was the main access to the city, and was equipped with three openings that are still visible: the central opening for



carriages and the side openings for pedestrians, while the internal area was used as a parade ground.

The outward-facing openings still show the grooves inside which the gates were lowered at night, while in the eastern facade some of the marble slabs that covered the entire monument are still visible. The interior of the monument is made up of blocks of pudding-stone.

On one hand, the intervention became necessary to ensure conservation of the monument: on the other, it was designed to enhance it, reconstructing the original monumentality and the connection with nearby monuments, the Torre dei Signori di Quart and the Roman theatre and amphitheatre. The project, which is in the phase of completion, called for archaeological excavation of the courtyard until reaching the original depth of the monument (compromised by 2000 years of urban stratification that has grown by about 2.5 metres), in order to restore the architectural dimensional ratios and thus enhance the majesty of the complex.

The operation then continued with preservation and restoration of the exposed bearing structures, and work is being completed on installation and arrangement of three catwalks, one for each opening, maintaining the pedestrian trafficability existing prior to the start of the work.

This project was financed with funds from the “Regional Competitiveness Operational Programme” (POR) for 2007-2013, as a further confirmation of the relations existing between the Valley and European institutions.

CITADEL OF YOUTH

The “Citadel of Youth” is one of the works that are transforming the face of Aosta in the cultural field. Although it opened in December 2009 and has been active since 2010, it is a “work in progress” because of the complexity of the intervention and the amplitude of the

plan of activities proposed and tested, which involve the youth population aged between 14 and 29 years residing in the municipality of Aosta and the rest of the region.

The idea of creating a space dedicated to the creativity and expressiveness of young people, as well as the promotion of culture, information and the development of civic education and integration among the youngest, developed from the experience of “Anita”, the municipal social centre located in the former slaughterhouse, which also housed the “Informagiovani” (“Informyouth”) service, and take shape in the framework of the European Interreg IIIA Italy-France project “Réseau de centres pour la formation et l’échange culturel et artistique entre Aoste et Albertville” (“Network of centres for training and cultural and artistic exchange between Aosta and Albertville”), conducted in conjunction with the municipality of Albertville, the French town in the department of Savoy in the Rhone-Alpes region, situated on the other side of Mont Blanc.

A fundamental part of the project – which had as its main purpose the creation of a network of cross-border spaces of encounter and exchange for young people, based on two “poles” respectively in the cities of Aosta and Albertville – was the works of redevelopment and preparation of the complex of buildings belonging to the former slaughterhouse and situated in the heart of Aosta, near the Arco d’Augusto and the pedestrian zone.

In the roughly 1,400 m² of the area, a complex of ductile areas has been created that are adaptable to various planned activities, from laboratories to exhibitions, from hosting of events and performances to information and teaching, up to catering and complementary services.

The premises of the Citadel house a modern modular theatre-auditorium, a recording studio and music workshop, an exhibition space that can also be used for

events such as seminars and conferences, a multimedia lab, two classrooms for courses, the “Informagiovani” office with adjoining space, a documentation centre with reading room, a music listening room, a cafe with “Forum” meeting space and an Internet Point.

The “Citadel of Youth” thus constitutes a pole of aggregation of services for young people, both as individuals and as members of organised or spontaneous groups, which from the outset offers itself as a centre of excellence and point of reference at regional level for offices and facilities for young people.

The Citadel hosts artistic, cultural, informational, social and recreational activities, leaving room for wide participation of young people, led by a specific programme of events and activities, as well as the availability of well-defined services that are responsive to the current needs of the new generations.

And it is precisely the proposals of the young people, together with cultural stimuli that emerge in society, that continually redraw the directions for development of the cultural programmes of the Citadel, which are then formalised in a programme of activity that the managing body submits for approval to the municipal and regional administration of Aosta, as well as to the Permanent Council of Local Aosta Valley Authorities, which together have signed a protocol of understanding to define the contents related to co-planning and cost-sharing for the structure.

INTERVENTIONS UNDER THE “AOSTA CAPITAL OF AUTONOMY” LAW

Additional measures that will affect Aosta in the coming years are those included in the Plan of interventions agreed between the municipal administration and the Autonomous Region of Valle



d’Aosta in the framework of the regional law on “Interventions for the Development of Aosta Capital of Autonomy” approved on 14 November 2011 by the Valley Council. The Plan agreed between the two entities is divided into five axes of intervention among which, from the perspective of tourist and cultural development, the following stand out: redevelopment of two of the most important squares in the city centre, construction of a large multi-storey car park in the south of the city to help rid the city centre of traffic, and redevelopment of the Arco d’Augusto (one of the most famous monuments of the Roman era), in view of its pedestrianisation, and of the Mont Fleury area, a vast peripheral space that includes some of the city’s sporting facilities.

As for the squares, the preliminary design documents related to the arrangement of the two areas concerned, Piazza Roncas and Piazza Giovanni XXIII, will be available in the autumn and will then be discussed in the relevant Council commissions, along with the Superintendent of Heritage and Cultural Activities, institutions, companies and categories concerned.

With regard to the multi-storey car parks, the work carried out by the Regional Administration for the construction of a first functional lot for 356 vehicles are in the procurement phase.

For Piazza Arco d’Augusto, documentary investigations required by the Superintendent of Heritage and Cultural Activities on the building called “Ca ‘Rossa”, in anticipation of its acquisition, are being completed with a view to designing an alternative road system in the area. Finally, a feasibility study for the Mont Fleury area has been carried out, which includes reorganisation of the sports area, including roads and the connection with the sporting centres of Gressan and Tzamberlet (the other sports facility nucleus in Aosta).

1.
– What is the city’s intended communication strategy for the European Capital of Culture event? (This question must be answered in greater detail at the final selection stage, in particular with regard to the media strategy and the mobilisation of the public and the inhabitants. At the final selection stage, consideration must be given in particular to the partnerships planned or established with the written press and the audiovisual sector with a view to ensuring media coverage of the event and of the plans relating to this strategy).

AN EVENT OF SUCH importance and prestige in the life of a city as the designation of European Capital of Culture requires a communication plan capable of enhancing perceived expectations for the event, as well as the participation and sharing of an increasingly growing number of European citizens, as the year of celebrations approaches.

In this context, an essential role will be played by the local, national and international press, whose work must contribute to promoting the name of Aosta in their respective areas of influence.

For this reason, it will be necessary to involve the territory’s main newspapers, including the daily “La Stampa” of Turin, the third largest in Italy in terms of diffusion and sales, active with an editorial office in the capital of Valle d’Aosta, and RAI - the Italian national public broadcasting service, present in Valle d’Aosta with an editorial staff and programme structure, in partnerships whose aim will be to increase the visibility of Aosta through the production of both ‘special issues’, inserts and dedicated pages, and news reports and television programs focusing on Aosta as Capital of Culture and the role of the European Union.

To maintain contacts with news representatives, the city of Aosta will avail itself of its own press office, supported by a communications agency so as to combine traditional “media relations” activities and the production of editorial content with activities inherent to advertising and marketing (particularly “social media marketing” and “digital pr”).

The production of content of a varied nature is expected (reports, images, videos, newsletters), using the tools made available by modern technology. In addition to the array of websites linked to the City of Aosta – which comprises the institutional website

“www.comune.aosta.it”, the access portal “Aostaonweb.it”, the tourism site “Aostalife.it”, and the online news site “Aostanforma.it” – special attention will be afforded to social networks such as Facebook, Twitter, Youtube, Instagram, etc., which will be used (including through the creation of new profiles and those already active) not only as a vehicle for information and content, but above all to create around the designation of Aosta a network capable of uniting all citizens of the European Union.

The launching of the official candidature and significant stages along the road leading to the 2019 deadline must be marked by the organisation of events throughout the territory, of great importance for their originality, quality and capability of engaging the population.

2.
– 2. How does the city plan to ensure the visibility of the European Union, which is awarding the title?

THE PARTICIPATION in the initiatives promoted by European institutions, the issues behind the project, the dimension which the city will be assume after completion of the transformation works and the specific content of the events planned for 2019 in Aosta are all heavily inspired by the values of the Union and will constitute reasons for visibility along the way from here to the awarding of the title (and also subsequently).

Additionally, the marketing and communication plan, which is set to operational long before 2019, will be agreed to and shared with the event’s institutional and private partners, and above all with the European Union’s monitoring and consulting group, in order to ensure the necessary visibility.

1.
 – *Does the city intend to set up a special monitoring and evaluation system:*
 - *for the impact of the programme and its knock-on effects?*
 - *for financial management?*

THE MONITORING AND evaluation system, structured based on the achievement of goals, will be implemented through a synergy between the city's municipal council, universities and the Organising Committee.

In particular, during the phase from 2015 to 2018, qualitative and quantitative indicators will be identified in an effort to pinpoint both the structural aspects (e.g. compliance with investment plans, implementation of works and the necessary preliminary services for the Capital of Europe), and socio-cultural issues (e.g. satisfaction of operators, functional involvement of stakeholders, impact on citizenship in the year of the European Capital, and impact on tourism, even after this period).

Monitoring the event's financial management will be predominant in the period 2015 – 2018, through the control, during the delicate phase of implementation of structural aspects (works in progress and under construction), as well as during the preliminary operational phase (communications, acquisition of goods and/or services, etc.), and 'instances' involving commitments, expenditures and reporting on the basis of standards stipulated by national and, above all, community legislation. This control system will continue through to 2019, focusing mainly on the realisation of events related to the Capital of Europe.

The monitoring of the project and its long-term effects will be analysed in a preparatory study in the period 2015 – 2018, entering into the concrete operational phase beginning in 2019, and in the years immediately following. The primary focus will be on the 'global impacts' on the population, which in our view must centre on and include both the tourist population and, of course, the general public. For this type of monitoring, the support of the University of

Valle d'Aosta will be essential, both during the preliminary preparatory phase of indicators and methods of analysis (interviews, questionnaires, print returns, sample surveys, specialised seminars), and during the data processing stage.

It is evident that the results of the monitoring activities must functionally respect all efficiency and effectiveness criteria, as well fully respond to a careful management of costs and benefits, particularly with regards to structural economic aspects, but also taking into account the epochal significance of being designated European Capital of Culture, and the inherent social and cultural aspects.

1.
 – *What, in your opinion, are the strong points of the city’s application and the parameters of its success as European Capital of Culture and what, on the other hand, are its weak points?*

THE CANDIDACY HAS an added value on several levels. Enhancement (and promotion) of the “Valle d’Aosta brand” (and not just of a single city) is probably the main one. Immediately linked to this is the fact that the works and the interventions identified in this dossier are not subject to the outcome of the candidacy, but will be implemented in any case (because they are already funded and started). “Aosta 2019” is not a “book of dreams”, or worse a source of ad hoc drainage of public funds but, through enhancing it to suitable dimensions, the possibility of crowning a course that our city has taken and which it intends to complete in any case. This philosophy is also reflected in aspects such as the decision not to request specific funding from the State for implementation of the planned programme (that is, to proceed with its own resources), and not through recourse to external figures for preparation of the candidacy dossier (thus freeing up resources so that they can be usefully allocated to execution of the programme). These are two decisions that, in addition to denoting awareness of the potential that the city is able to express (and who better than those who live it every day can illustrate it to the rest of the world?) are a sign of respect for the community, in a moment of crisis of the system, with extremely significant repercussions on public sector budgets.

As for weaknesses, a potentially critical issue concerns connections, obviously influenced by the intra-mountain and border nature of our region. If, however, it may not be easy to reach (although investments will be made for 2019, as mentioned above, in particular with regard to airport and railway infrastructure), this also means that those who visit the Valle d’Aosta do not come by chance, but as the result of a conscious and targeted choice. In this sense, being able to count on motivated

visitors is an added value, alongside those listed so far in view of Aosta 2019.

Moreover, the fact that in a few minutes, it is possible to move from one monument to another within the city or, by extending the perspective to the entire region, from Roman ruins to some of the best known snow areas of Europe, gives our small dimensions (combined with great experience in terms of tourist accommodation in our area) a richness that we believe could be the key to a new way of interpreting the concept of “European Capital of Culture”.

2.
 – *Does the city intend to develop particular cultural projects in the coming years, irrespective of the outcome of its application for the title of European Capital of Culture? Please comment.*

THE VOLUME OF THE ACTIVITIES promoted by Aosta in the cultural field, and the credibility of its financial statements, are such as to make the implementation of innovative projects likely, regardless of the outcome of the candidacy.

3.
 – *Please add below any further comments which you deem necessary on the subject of this application.*

NOTHING PARTICULAR to be added.

