



BUILDING BACK ALBANIA'S CULTURAL HERITAGE FOR THE FUTURE



THE MONASTERY CHURCH OF RUBIK, MIRDITË, ALBANIA

EU4CULTURE PROGRAMME

The November 2019 earthquake caused extensive damage in 11 municipalities. UNOPS is partnering with the Government of Albania and the European Union, to facilitate the post-earthquake revitalization and upgrade the economic and tourism infrastructure of a large number of key cultural heritage sites, museums, and cultural hubs.

FACTS & FIGURES



HISTORY AND BACKGROUND

Towering over the small community of Rubik, the Franciscan Church with a Monastery sits at the top of a white cliff as if observing the daily activities of the city. Originally established in 1166 as one of four Benedictine Conventions in Mirdita, the church was later delivered to the Franciscan Order in Albania sometime around the year 1217.

CONSERVATION WORKS CONDUCTED

The Monastery Church in Rubik rises on a steep cliff by the river Fan near Rubik. It looks as if it was sculpted on stone. The Church suffered damage after the earthquake. The roof started to leak and many cracks were observed on its plastered facade.

The restoration conducted on the site of the Church included thorough repairs of the roof and installation of new

waterproof layers as well as a new gutter system. The facade which was the most delicate part of the building was analysed in detail. The outcome of the analysis was that the most recent plaster was cement based. Initial cracks were allowing moisture to enter, and due to the non permeability of cement, the moisture would stay trapped and would cause further damage resulting in separation of the plaster from the stone wall. If left any longer, the facade would have collapsed.

After careful analysis of historical evidence, it was decided to remove the inappropriate plaster and leave the stone wall exposed. This became especially important in the section of the apse, where a 13th century alternating stone structure was revealed. The alternation in between tuff and lime stone in the masonry structure creates an esthetically pleasing and a very unique outlook of the apse compared to other Churches of a similar period in Albania. Furthermore and in the interior, a necessary emergency consolidation of the remains of the 13th century wall paintings were conducted as well as the upgrade of the electrical installations and lighting creating a more comfortable atmosphere inside.

The works were concluded with repair of the drainage system and the pavement around the Church, including the new lighting stretching down the hill to the main entrance gate.



The Monastery Church in Rubik is now open for visitors and believers who traditionally were both Albanian and foreigners.



CONTACTS

UNOPS ALBANIA, UN House Skanderbeg Street, Gurten Building 3rd Floor, Tirana, Albania

www.eu4culture.al

email: info@eu4culture.al

