

XIII European Mountain Convention

Shaping the future of mountain economies

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The High Mountains

Networking & Social Innovation

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**Epirus Mountain
Labs Network**

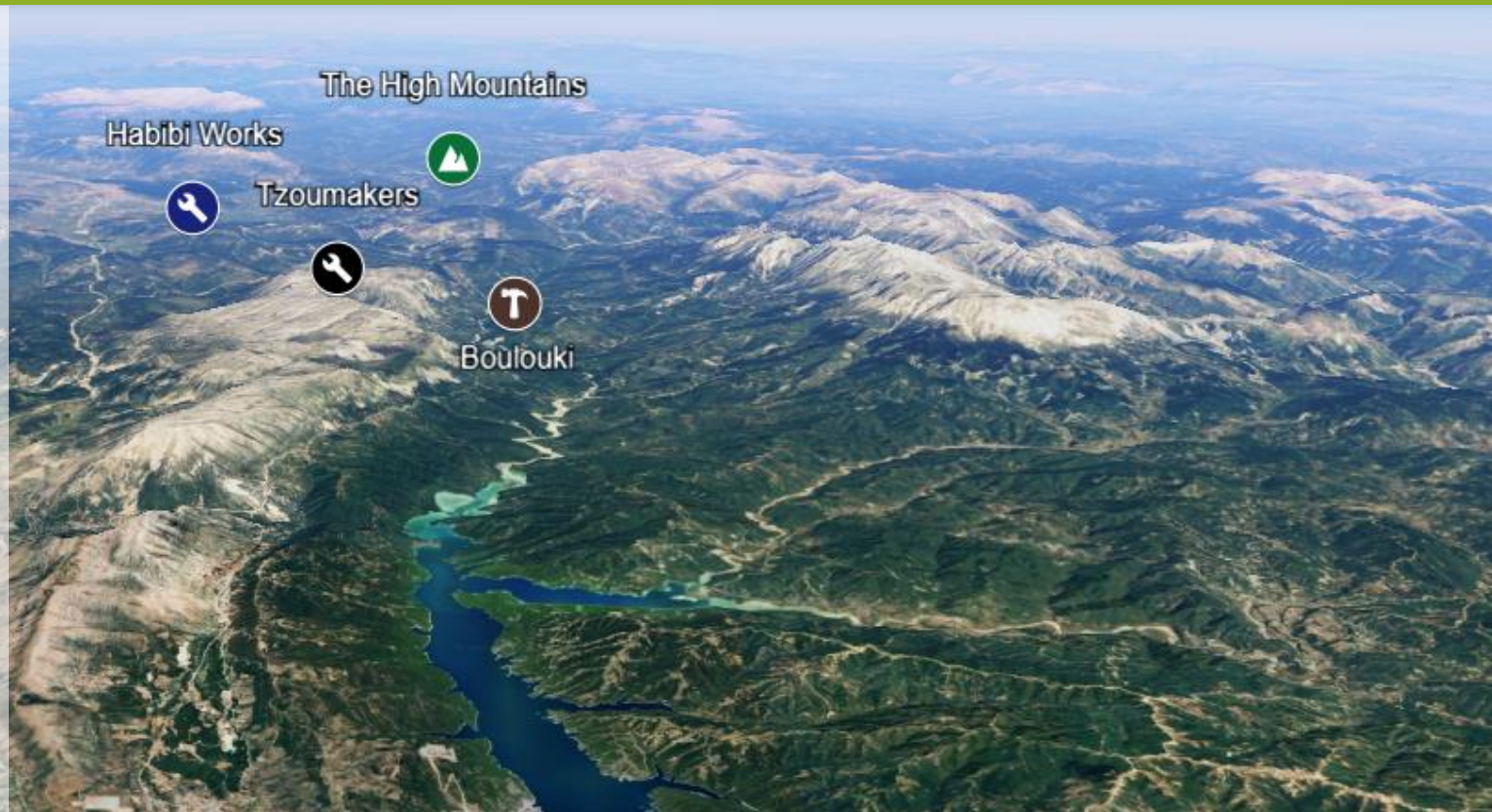
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The Epirus Mountain Labs Network

“Collectively address rural decline and promote sustainable mountain living!”

Four neighboring SSE organizations repurpose abandoned infrastructure for community spaces, focusing on open-source agricultural tools, traditional building techniques, and sustainable production methods.



The Network



- ✓ A Mountain Communities Support Center
- ✓ 2 Makerspaces
- ✓ A Centre for research and training on heritage building skills & materials
- ✓ An Energy Community



Proud members of the
Social & Solidarity
Economy Ecosystem
of Epirus





The High Mountains: The Mountain Communities Support Center



About our Cooperative



Founded in 2016 in the mountain village of Demati by a group of people who were driven to create a **different way of life in the mountains!**



Mission

To promote **de-urbanization**, **repopulation**, and **sustainable development** of mountain areas.



Purpose

To provide **support** and **infrastructure** to:

- people who live, produce, and create in the mountains
- Cultural Associations
- Mountain Municipalities
- people who want to live in mountain villages.



Areas of Action



Enhancing De-urbanisation

Focus on repopulating mountain areas to combat urban migration.



Supporting Mountain Production

Implement a *Socially Supported Mountain Production* model to boost local economies.



Strengthening Social Entrepreneurship

Provide guidance and assistance to enhance social entrepreneurial initiatives.



Fostering Solidarity Tourism

Promote volunteerism and interculturalism to enrich tourism experiences and support local communities.



Capacity Building in Social Innovation

Develop business models that encourage social innovation in mountain communities.



Networking

Bring together people, institutions, and local authorities of the mountain regions





Tzoumakers: Makerspace for open source agricultural technologies



TZOUMAKERS



Lab
RESEARCH HUB

Commons



**cosmo
localism**



Design Global Manufacture Local



Identifying needs



Design Global Manufacture Local



Participatory design based on global digital commons



Design Global Manufacture Local



Localised manufacturing



Design Global Manufacture Local



Testing the solution





Free wi-fi community Network





First tool constructed





Community projects





Habibi.Works: Intercultural Makerspace & Community Space



Working with the refugee community



“Habibi.Works is a space of mutual learning, re- and un-learning.

Constantly evolving, responding and adapting to the needs and wishes brought forward by the communities.”



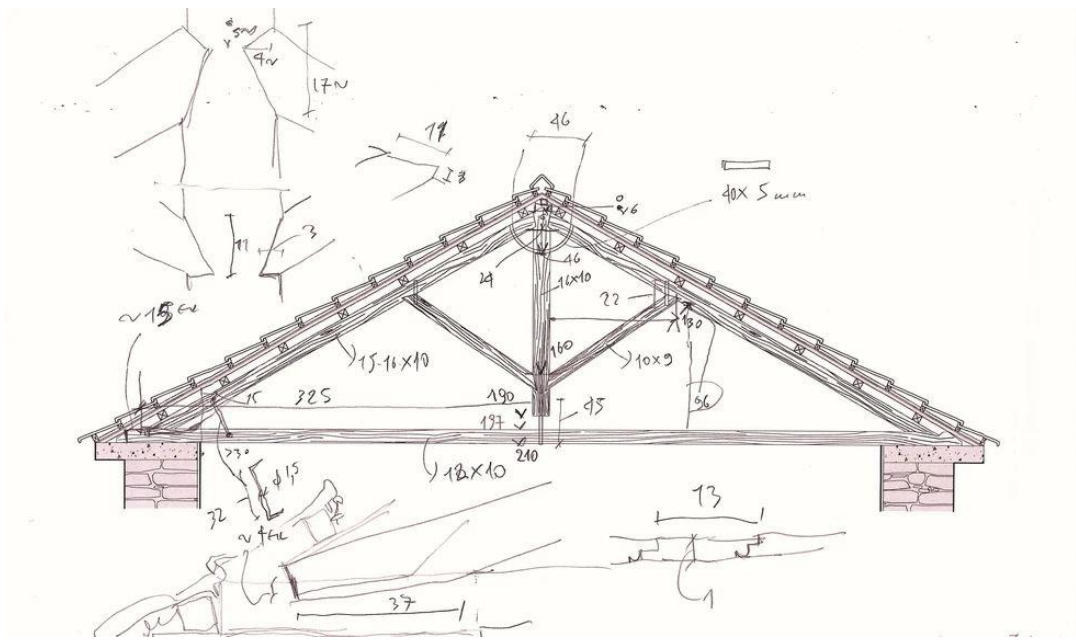


Boulouki: Centre for research and training on heritage building skills & materials



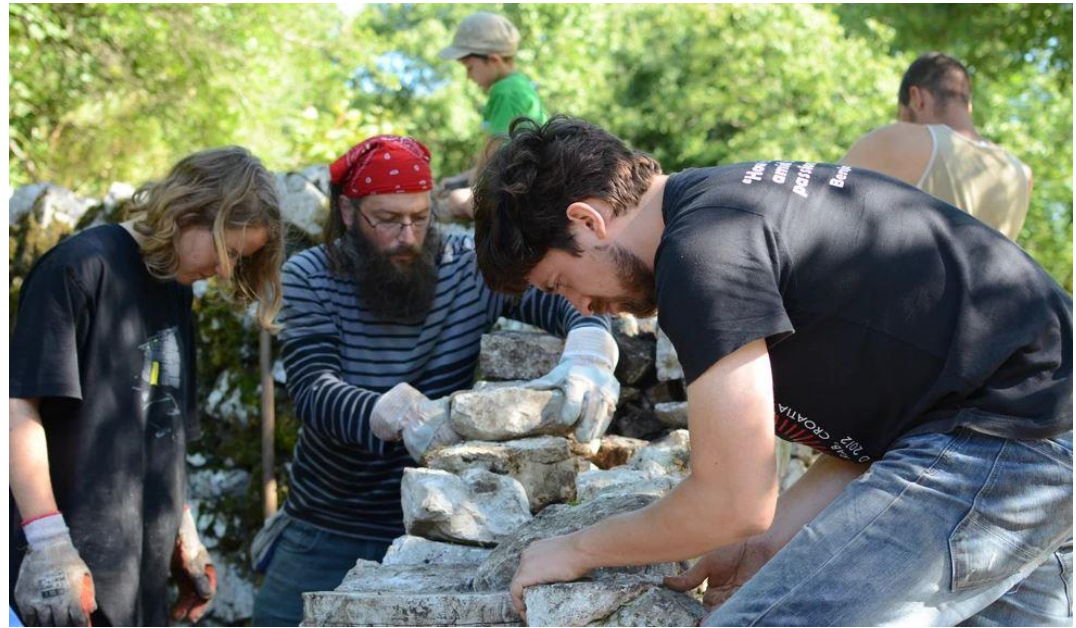
**Traveling companies of stone masons & craftsmen*





Trace & Document Traditional Knowledge





Study & disseminate heritage building techniques





European Heritage Awards / Europa Nostra Awards 2024





CommonEn: The Energy Community

Mountains & Energy Democracy



- ✓ 60 households
- ✓ 2 enterprises





The conference of the Global Network **Wind Empowerment** took place in the Epirus region this year, and participants from across the world visited local initiatives to give and take inspiration from. Among those was the **Tzoumakers Makerspace**, where they helped place the **wind turbine** created by students at our **energy summer school** three years ago.

Activities Since 2018

Developing Infrastructure and Communities



1

Focus on Infrastructure Development

The initiative has prioritized developing infrastructure around local and global common resources since 2018.

2

Diverse Activities Offered

Activities include summer schools, workshops, seminars, trainings, and cultural events aimed at fostering engagement.

3

Engagement of Diverse Actors

Participants from various backgrounds engage in hands-on projects to contribute creatively.

4

Hands-On Projects

Projects feature sustainable construction and art sessions, encouraging practical involvement.

5

Collaboration to Address Rural Challenges

Participants collaborate to tackle rural challenges, focusing on innovative solutions.

6

Development of Business Models

Social innovation business models and community projects are developed through collaborative efforts.

7

Support for Counter-Urbanization

Using these labs as centers for population recruitment furthers the initiative's support of counter-urbanization.





Collaborations & Stakeholders

Engaging with Diverse Entities for Community Development



+7 Social & Solidarity Economy Organizations



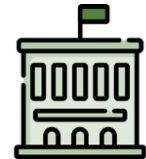
3 Mountain Municipalities



3 Mountain Communities



2 local LAGs (Local Action Groups)



The Region of Epirus

Focus on strategic planning for **smart villages** and **rural incubators**, integrating technology and innovation in community development.



Key Factors

Transforming Sustainable Mountain Development

1 Transferable Model for Sustainable Development

Fostering sustainable practices through the application of a model adaptable to other mountainous regions.

2 Knowledge-Sharing Communities

Encouraging knowledge exchange and drawing a diverse range of professionals and artists to rural regions.

3 Revitalizing Abandoned Villages

Implementing practical solutions to breathe new life into previously abandoned villages and enhance local engagement.

4 Replicable Framework

Creating a replicable framework for connecting local and global resources, enabling sustainable economic alternatives for growth.

5 Increased Social and Economic Activity

Strengthening social and economic activities in areas that were previously depopulated.

6 Collaborative Networks

Transforming mountain economies effectively and creating new opportunities via collaboration.

7 Opportunities for Relocation

Offering new opportunities for individuals considering relocation to these regions.



Last but not least...

**People,
their initiatives &
ecosystemic work
make mountain
communities tick!**



Gràcies
Gracias
Thank you
Merci
Ευχαριστώ!

