



PARTICIPATORY GOVERNANCE AND VALORISATION OF ADRIATIC COASTAL FORTIFICATIONS – THE CASE OF PULA, CROATIA



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ADRIATIC COASTAL FORTIFICATIONS

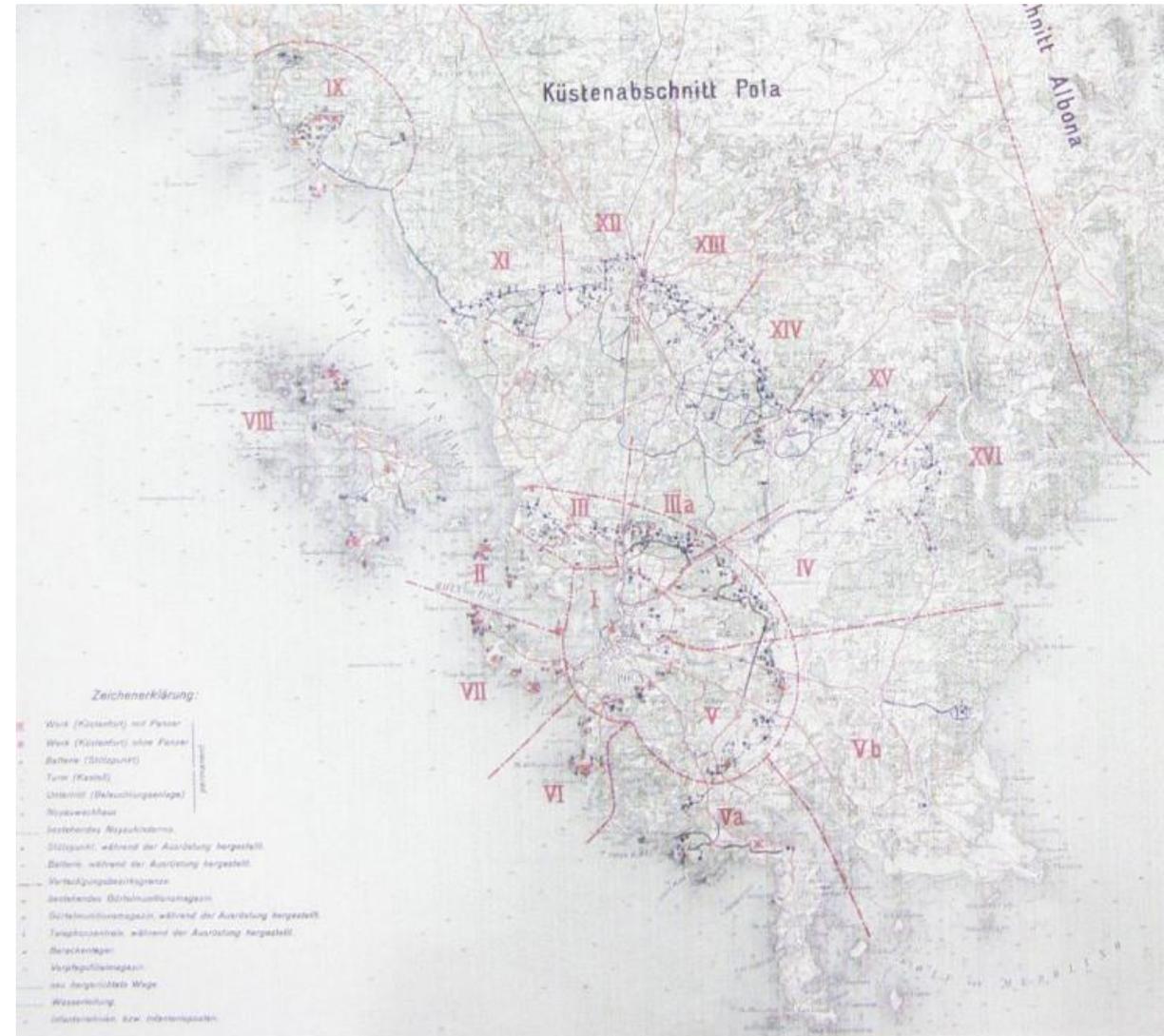
- ✓ Due to its important geopolitical position and turbulent multicultural history at the crossroads of European cultures, Croatian Adriatic is characterized by a rich diversity of fortified landscapes.
- ✓ From the pre-historic, Hellenic and Roman period, fortified structures along the Adriatic coast were developed to protect the ancient maritime trade routes.
- ✓ From the 16th to 18th century the great powers: the Ottoman Empire, the Habsburg Monarchy and the Republic of Venice fought for supremacy in south-eastern Europe.
- ✓ The result and contemporary legacy: well-preserved Adriatic fortifications: Venetian and Habsburg coastal systems, French and British forts > common European and World heritage.





Former Naval Fortress Pula

- ✓ Well preserved Adriatic coastal systems of Venetian and Austro-Hungarian fortifications are witnesses of the turbulent past and a common European heritage.
- ✓ Some of them are already listed as UNESCO-world heritage, other are still waiting a proper valorisation, such as the unique former Naval Fortress Pula.



HOW TO VALORIZE OUR COMMON EUROPEAN HERITAGE?



- The cultural heritage of Europe is our common wealth, which we have inherited from previous generations and pass on to those to come. It is an irreplaceable repository of knowledge and a valuable resource for economic growth, employment and social cohesion.
- The common European heritage is the driver of our cultural and creative industries. Our cultural heritage and the way we preserve and valorize it is the main factor in defining the attractiveness of Europe as a place to live, work and travel.

LEGACY OF EYCH2018: PROMOTION OF THE KEY EUROPEAN VALUES THROUGH PARTICIPATORY HERITAGE MANAGEMENT

Our experience has showed that a project-based research and training which included students, researchers, conservation offices, tourist boards, NGO activists, tourist guides and the local community could enhance awareness raising and capacity building efforts in the field of sustainable heritage management, cultural education and promotion of the key European values, which are the most important objectives of the European programmes, such as the Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe.



FORTIFIED HERITAGE COUNTS FOR EUROPE



Project Cultural Heritage Counts for Europe:
The Holistic Four Domain Approach to Sustainable Development

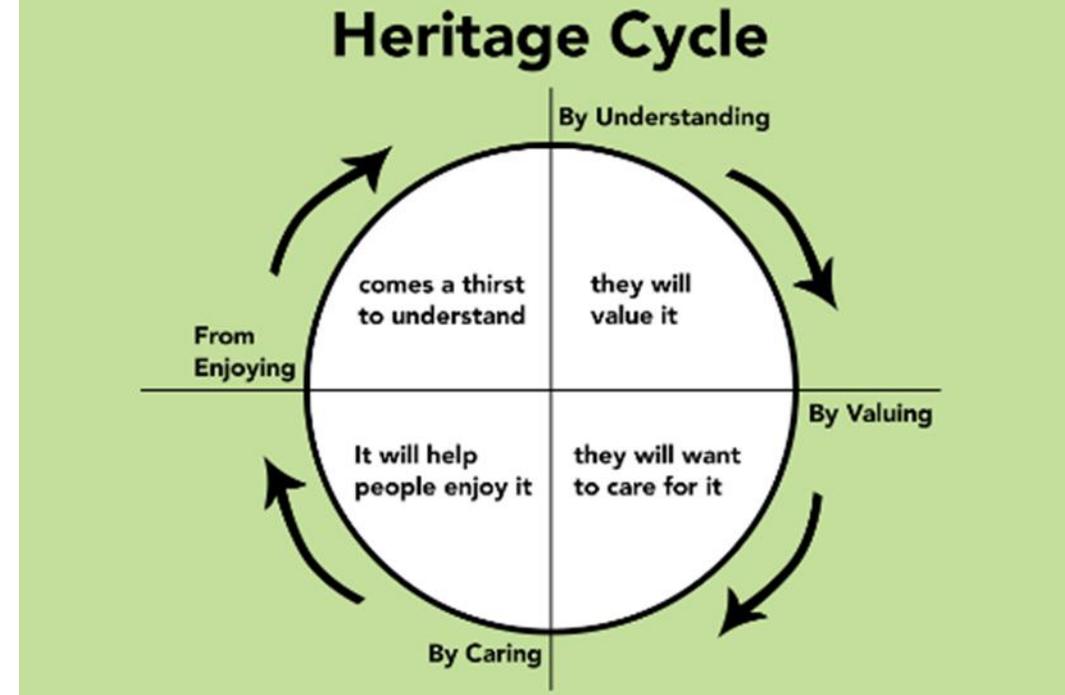
The studies conducted in the framework of EU projects indicated contribution of fortified heritage to sustainable development:

- a) Economic sustainability:** its adaptive reuse stimulates entrepreneurship and creativity, generating new employment and increasing the incomes of included stakeholders with multiplication effects, stimulating the local economy;
- b) Social sustainability:** the inclusion of local communities results in strengthening the social capital of the community, contributing to social integration and the social inclusion;
- c) Environmental sustainability:** energy-efficient renovation, sustainable waste management and recycling, etc.;
- d) Cultural sustainability:** fortifications are significant due to their contribution to the conservation of cultural and historical landscape as a significant aspect of the cultural identity of a local community as well as cultural diversity.

/Urošević, Afrić Rakitovac (2017): Sustainable development potential of fortified heritage in Croatia/

Participatory governance of fortified heritage

- A model of management of heritage sites that will include greater participation of civil society.
- Involvement of all interested stakeholders in research related to sustainable valorisation of fortified heritage through international networking.
- Educational and creative workshops for local residents, children and students.
- Strengthening awareness of the value of cultural heritage, strengthening capacity in local administration, cultural and scientific institutions.



BEST PRACTICE MODELS OF PARTICIPATORY FORTIFIED HERITAGE GOVERNANCE: Fondazione Forte Marghera



Storie camminate e raccontate
27 settembre 2022

Patrimonio culturale sostenibile

- ✓ A favorite **recreation area** with pedestrian and bicycle paths for the local population, a **cultural district** with numerous exhibition spaces in former military barracks, and a **creative cluster** that connects university departments with a research center and a kind of **entrepreneurial incubator for local cooperatives**. **Social enterprises**, such as the Controvento cooperative, created 75 new jobs, and half of the employees are hard-to-employ people.
- ✓ The city of Venice founded the Forte Marghera Foundation, which operates on a non-profit basis, conducting research, training and professional development, organizing cultural initiatives, promoting interventions co-financed with public funds, consulting and planning in the field of heritage maintenance and revitalization.

BEST PRACTICE MODELS OF PARTICIPATORY FORTIFIED HERITAGE GOVERNANCE: DUBROVNIK

- **The Society of Friends of Dubrovnik Antiques** - founded back in 1952 to sensitize the broader public on the importance of preservation of Dubrovnik's cultural and historical heritage, raising awareness and interest for them, appealing to the pride and appreciation of the public.
- 70 years of work in the service of heritage
- With more than 1 million tourists per year and with an increase in ticket prices (20 EUR), Dubrovnik City Walls present a huge development potential with more than 20 million EUR a year (which is two times more than the budget of the Ministry of Culture for tangible heritage!)
- Fortified heritage in the function of local economic development, heritage preservation and quality of life of the local community.



BEST PRACTICE MODELS OF PARTICIPATORY FORTIFIED HERITAGE GOVERNANCE: ŠIBENIK

- ✓ **Public Institution Fortress of Culture Šibenik:** founded in June 2016. Today it employs 50 experts and manage three revitalized Šibenik's Fortresses, St. Michael's, Barone and St. John's Fortress.
- ✓ More than 200.000 visitors per year, 50 events, self-sustainable through own resources and EU projects
- ✓ **Friends Club of Šibenik Fortresses** was founded in 2014, as an audience development programme and an answer to the challenge of reconnecting the local community with its newly revitalized cultural heritage.
- ✓ Today, it counts over 5000 active members (about 10% of city population). The annual membership of Friends Club implies unlimited daily entrances on both revitalized fortresses, and much more. Part of the annual membership fee income is directed in preserving Šibenik's cultural heritage.



EXAMPLES OF ADAPTIVE REUSE AND PARTICIPATORY GOVERNANCE OF PULA'S FORTIFICATIONS



EXAMPLES OF PARTICIPATORY VALORISATION – 20 CENTURY FORTIFICATIONS (FORT SVETICA – LIŽNJAN)



Most of local forts (Casoni Vecchi, Turcian, Pomer, and Punta Christo) are looked after by NGO-s and volunteers.



PILOT PROJECT ADRIFORT – CREATION OF NEW LOCAL CULTURAL ROUTE AND CULTURAL AND TOURISTIC PARK – STUDENT SUMMER SCHOOL



- ✓ Cultural routes developed in the framework of the ADRIFORT project
- ✓ Bike and walking routes connecting several fortresses on the entrance of the Pula's port
- ✓ Punta Christo fortress as the centre for youth initiatives and a venue for popular music festival

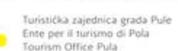
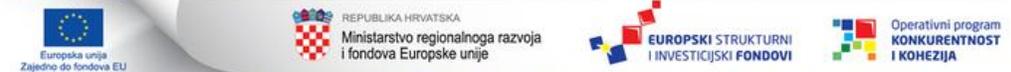
LOCAL BEST PRACTICE OF PARTICIPATORY VALORISATION – FORT VERUDELA - AQUARIUM

- Local best practice of participatory and sustainable valorisation of fortified and maritime heritage
- 20 years of work of enthusiasts who renovated the Austrian fort: today 50 employees, 200.000 visitors
- From a family business to the awarded Aquarium and the Centre for the Rescue of Sea Turtles, Blue School, education and scientific activities
- Today, Fortress Verudela is an exceptional and positive example of cultural heritage revitalization. With the commitment of the Aquarium staff, once a neglected historic building has become an important addition to the tourist offer of Pula, Istria and Croatia and can be visited throughout the year.



LOCAL BEST PRACTICE OF PARTICIPATORY VALORISATION – FORT CENTER PULA

- ✓ The Pula Fort Center is a knowledge and documentation centre aiming to acquaint visitors with the city of Pula's fortification system that had a significant impact on the narrative of the city, in a historical and contemporary context.
- ✓ It displays museum collections and it positions itself as a dynamic platform for dialogues and educational activities .
- ✓ The multimedia exhibition in the visitor center in the Venetian Castle built on the central city hill by the military engineer Antoine De Ville built from 1631 to 1633.
- ✓ The part of the ITI (Integrated Territorial Investment) mechanism programme which link up the Zerostrasse system of underground tunnels/shelters with the Castle.



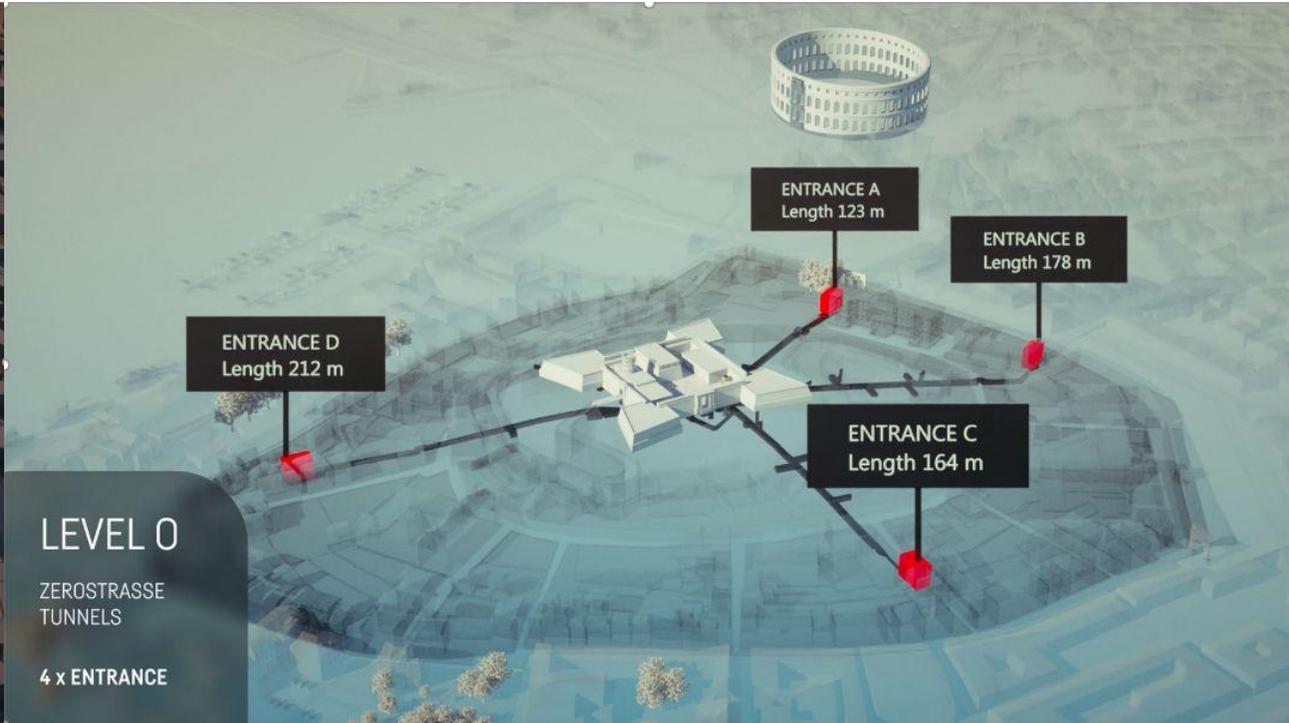
The Pula Fort Center is part of the Historical Maritime Museum of Istria in the Kaštel fortress, the central part of the system of defences - the Maritime Fortresses of Pula, with underground shelters ZeroStrasse.



PULA FORT CENTER - EXHIBITION

The multimedia exhibition presents 28 city forts located in 3 rings around the central Venetian Castle and more than two hundred different military buildings!





LEVEL 0

ZEROSTRASSE
TUNNELS

4 x ENTRANCE

LOCAL BEST PRACTICE OF PARTICIPATORY VALORISATION OF FORTIFICATIONS – BRIONI MINOR / NP BRIJUNI

- ✓ The most impressive and the biggest fort in the local system built from 1895 to 1900 for the purpose of defending Pula – the main naval base of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy.
- ✓ Thanks to the **International Fortification Architecture Workshop**, which has been held on the islands for many years, the professionals and the public are familiar with the importance of this part of the island's heritage
- ✓ Brioni Minor is used by the Ulysses theatre as a venue for summer theatre festival but NP Brijuni intends to completely renovate the forts on the islands through new projects: in the framework of the recent project infrastructure for summer schools is arranged.



FORTIFIED ARCHITECTURE FOR THE CULTURE OF PEACE – EUROPEAN BEST PRACTICE IN FORTIFIED HERITAGE MANAGEMENT – FORTIC Conference, Pula-Brijuni 15-17 September



Juraj Dobrila University of Pula in partnership with the [FORTIC partnership consortium](#) and international expert networks is organizing the international scientific conference FORTIFIED ARCHITECTURE FOR THE CULTURE OF PEACE – EUROPEAN BEST PRACTICE IN FORTIFIED HERITAGE MANAGEMENT, which will be held in NP Brijuni from 15 to 17 September 2025.





Fortified Architecture for the Culture of Peace – FORTIC International Scientific Conference 2025 / About the conference

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About the conference

Juraj Dobrila University of Pula in partnership with the **FORTIC partnership consortium** and international expert networks is

- https://fet.unipu.hr/fet/fortic/about_the_conference

Thank you for your attention!

