



European  
Cultural Route  
Fortified Monuments

22 April 2026  
La Línea de la Concepción, Spain

# FORTE CULTURA Cultural Route and Cluster Strategy



Diputación  
de Cádiz



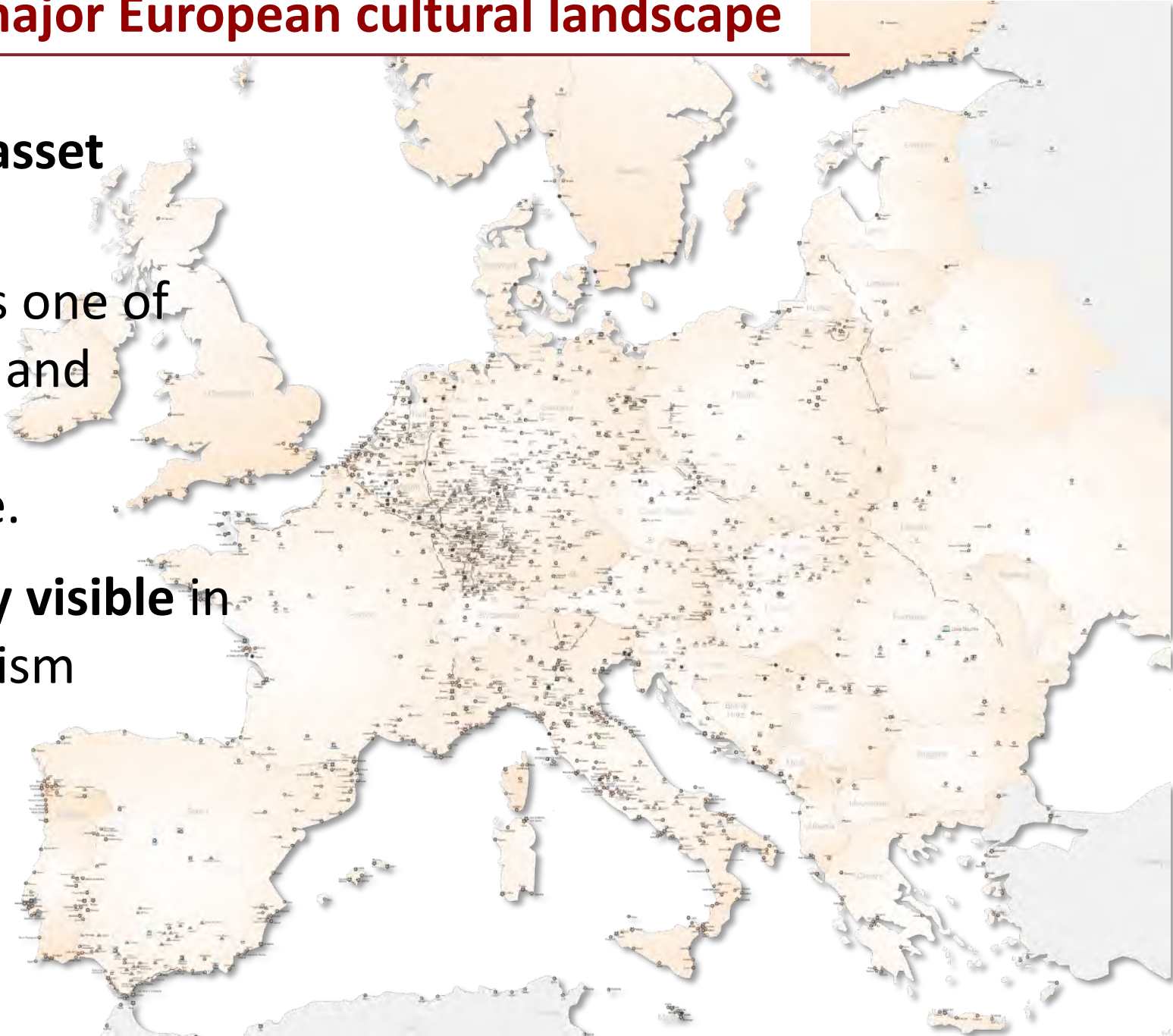
*supported by Diputación de Cádiz and the City of La Línea de la Concepción*

# Fortified heritage: a major European cultural landscape

## A European unique asset

\* Fortified heritage is one of the most **impressive** and **widespread** cultural landscapes in Europe.

\* Yet, **not sufficiently visible** in the cultural and tourism market



# The Paradox



## A very rich heritage, but still a fragmented system

\* Fortresses were historically built as **defensive networks** and **territorial systems**

\* Today they are often managed and promoted as **separated monuments**

\* This weakens **visibility, cooperation** and **impact**

**Our challenge: from fragmentation to a structured cooperation system**



# What is FORTE CULTURA



## A European network

- \* FORTE CULTURA connects **sites, municipalities, institutions and experts**
- \* Active in **17 countries**
- \* Combines **heritage interpretation, tourism development and cooperation**
- \* A **Cultural Route for a European narrative**

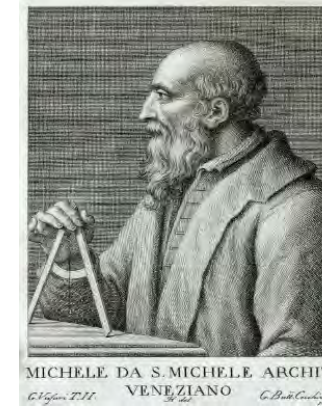


# A route with a strong European theme



## From Bastions to Bunkers

- \* The **gunpowder revolution** transformed military architecture in Europe
- \* Fortified systems **evolved** from **bastions**, to forts, defensive lines and **bunkers**
- \* What emerges is a continuous record of **technological rivalry, engineering intelligence, and territorial organisation**
- \* This ongoing development forms a coherent **European narrative**



M. Sammicheli



S. Stevin



S. Le Prestre de Vauban



M. R. de Montalembert

# Not a conventional route

**FORTE CULTURA is not a linear itinerary,  
it is a archipelago route**

- \* It is a **constellation** of sites distributed along frontiers, rivers, coasts and mountain systems.
- \* Sites that are not isolated points on a map.
- \* They reflect a wider European **geography** of defense and trade systems.

**The European dimension of our work.**



# More than monuments

## A tangible and intangible heritage

### Tangible

- \* architecture and engineering
- \* urban form and landscape design

### Intangible

- \* memory of conflict and defence
- \* circulation of knowledge and engineers
- \* reinterpretation for contemporary society



# A transformation of meaning

## From military function to cultural value

Today fortresses can become:

- \* places of interpretation and education
- \* cultural venues and museums
- \* destinations for slow tourism
- \* drivers of local development,
- \* spaces of remembrance and dialogue.

## Fortresses for Culture and Peace



## Why many fortified sites struggle?

\* The answer is **fragmentation**

This cause:

\* **Insufficient** critical mass

\* **Limited** communication capacity

\* **Weak** political leverage

\* **Difficult** access to partnerships and European funding

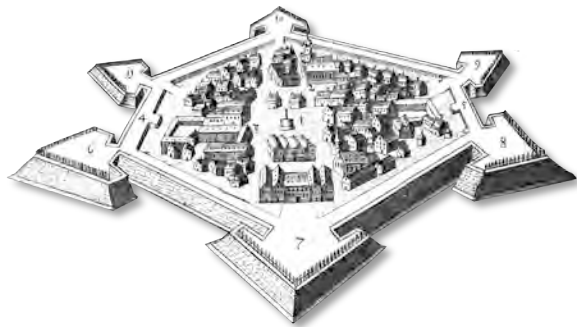
\* **Weak** narrative framework

# The strategic answer



## The FORTE CULTURA cluster strategy

- \* A Cluster **creates critical mass**
- \* It connect sites, institutions and stakeholders around **common goals**
- \* A Cluster is a regional or thematic **platform for cooperation**
- \* A Cluster is both a **local tool** and a **European gateway**.



Local actors



Cluster



European network

# What a cluster produces

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## Concrete added value

1. Joint **tourism products** and **narratives**
2. Shared **communication** and **branding**
3. Greater **institutional visibility**
4. Better access to **projects** and **funding**
5. Richer and more **coherent visitor experience**



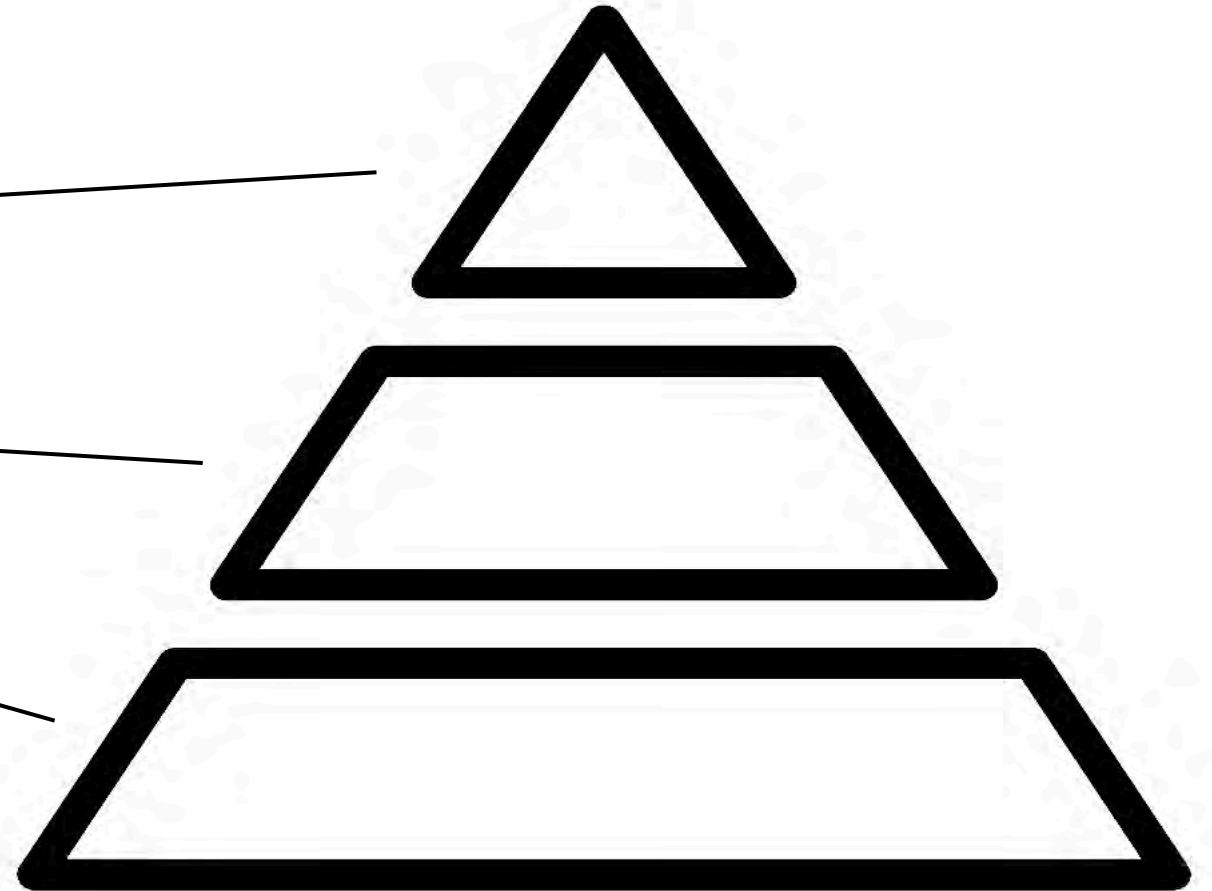
## Three connected levels

- **Local cooperation**

- **Regional identity**

- **European integration**

**under a common strategy**





European Cultural Route Fortified Monuments

# Existing example: Elbe Fortresses

## Cultural ribbon fortified monuments on the Elbe river

From its source in the Czech Giant Mountains to its mouth in the North Sea near Cuxhaven, the Elbe river connects 1091 kilometres of magnificent cultural landscapes.

Conquer the **FORTE CULTURA Elbe fortresses** and discover the region from a new perspective.

[Learn more](#)



# Existing example: Upper Rhine



## Cultural heritage fortified monuments of the Upper Rhine region

The Upper Rhine region is one of the most fought-over regions in Europe. Fortified monuments from all eras bear witness to this exciting cultural history. Today they are monuments full of life and culture.

Discover the history of fortress construction over the last 350 years in the **30 FORTE CULTURA fortresses and museums on the Upper Rhine.**

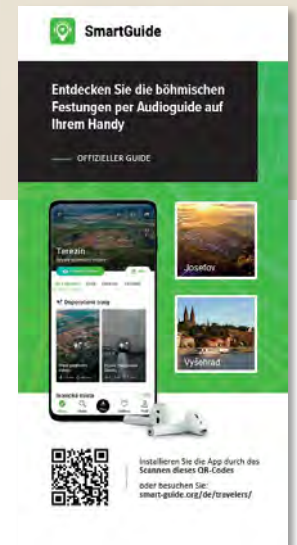
[Learn more](#)



## Imperial fortresses of Bohemia (CZ)

The imperial fortresses in Bohemia (CZ) are large fortified towns, some of which were built by the Habsburg emperors in the 17th and 18th centuries. Discover the largest fortresses in Europe from the heyday of modern fortress construction.

[Learn more](#)





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# The Andalusia Cluster



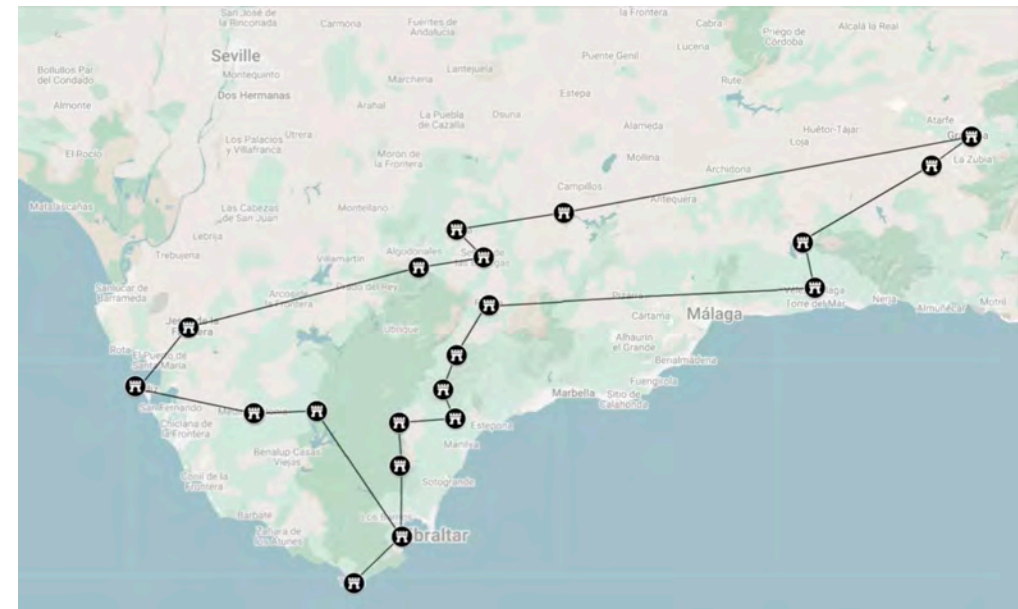
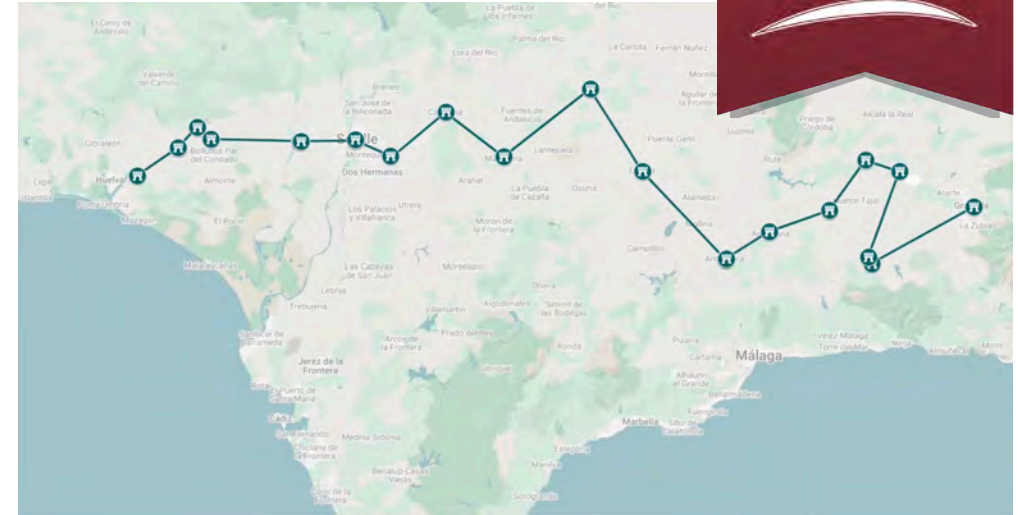
# What the Andalusia Cluster can achieve



## Expected added value

- \* a **shared narrative** for Andalusian fortified heritage
- \* **coordinated** promotion and interpretation
- \* **stronger cooperation** among institutions and stakeholders
- \* better basis for **projects, partnerships** and **wider recognition**

**A regional initiative with a clear European horizon**



# Final vision and closing

**We have the responsibility to transform our Fortified Heritage.**

**From:**

- \* military infrastructures
- \* isolated monuments
- \* local assets
- \* places of conflict

**To:**

- \* cultural infrastructures
- \* connected systems
- \* shared European narratives
- \* places of encounter and peace



**FORTE CULTURA:**  
Connecting **heritage,**  
**territories** and **people**

**Fortresses for**  
**Culture and Peace**



European  
Cultural Route  
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*Thank you for your attention!*

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