

General Assembly 2026, La Línea de la Concepción (ES)

Report of the President on the Financial Year 2025



Dear members,
dear colleagues,
ladies and gentlemen,

First of all, I would like to thank the City of La Línea de la Concepción, our local hosts and partners, for their hospitality and support on the occasion of our FORTE CULTURA General Assembly 2026.

In accordance with the Articles of Association, I am pleased to present my report on the activities and results of the 2025 financial year.

This is my first President's Report in this role, and I would like to thank you for the trust placed in me and to acknowledge the work carried out in previous years by the former President and by all those who have contributed to the development of FORTE CULTURA as a European Cultural Route and fortress network.

Membership Development 2025

On 31 December 2025, FORTE CULTURA e.V. had **68 ordinary members in 17 countries**.

The following new members joined our network in 2025:

- Daugavpils City Municipal Institution "Daugavpils Fortress & Museums Administration", Latvia
- Juraj Dobrila University of Pula, Faculty of Economics and Tourism "Dr. Mijo Mirković", Croatia
- Comune di Sant'Oreste, Italy
- Prof. Arch. Gregory Paolucci, Italy
- Comunità Montana di Valle Sabbia, Italy
- Tourplus Cyprus, Cyprus
- University of Malta, Malta
- Federation La Caponnière, Belfort, France
- Olha Tikhonova, Ukraine
- Associazione La Cittadella di Alessandria – Faro di pace in Europa, Italy
- one further member who does not wish to be named publicly.

By the end of 2025, FORTE CULTURA represented **66 heritage sites in 15 countries as official stations of the European Cultural Route**.

In the first months of 2026, the following new members joined:

- Din l-Art Ħelwa, Malta
- PEACE MUSEUM Bridge at Remagen e.V., Germany
- Dr. John Ebejer, Malta
- the municipalities of Avrieux and Aussois for the Fortress System Esseillon, France.

At the same time, the following members left the network:

- Fundacja Nasza Historia, Modlin, Poland
- Republic of San Marino.

Overall, the balance remains positive.

Network Activities 2025

The work of FORTE CULTURA in 2025 was again characterised by a broad range of activities at local, regional and European level.

Highlights of our own network events included:

- the **FORTE CULTURA Guide Workshop** in Büdingen in January;
- the **FORTE CULTURA Congress 2025 at Forte di Bard** in March, combined with the General Assembly;
- the **FORTE CULTURA Pilot and Study Tour to Portugal** in September;
- the online workshop on **Reveel.guide** in October;
- the **FORTE CULTURA OMM 2025** in December.

The **European Fortress Summer 2025** again provided an important framework for visibility and cooperation.

Our network was also represented in a range of external conferences and professional meetings, including:

- ITB Berlin;
- the Annual Congress of Liberation Route Europe in Krakow;
- FORTMED 2025 in Caserta;
- the German-Polish Conference on the Pomeranian Wall in Wałcz;
- the “Fortifications at Risk” conference of the Fortress Study Group in Portsmouth;
- the FORTIC scientific conference in Brijuni;
- the 14th EICR Advisory Forum on Cultural Routes in Cappadocia;
- the VII Congress on Fortifications and Military Heritage in Valdepeñas;
- the Malta Heritage Press Tour;
- the EFFORTS workshop on the Baltic Route Cluster in Vilnius.

Other Network Activities 2025

The **Mountain Fortresses Cluster** continued to develop through several meetings, the preparation of a road map for a UNESCO application, and the further advancement of the dedicated website.

A new FORTE CULTURA cluster and brochure on **Cold War Bunkers** was also developed.

Communication activities intensified during the year. The **network blog** became more active, with increased contributions from members. The **monthly network newsletter** and our **social media channels** also contributed to strengthening visibility and internal exchange.

FORTE CULTURA also maintained its ongoing statement against war and in favour of solidarity with the people of Ukraine, including the fundraising campaign for Medzhybizh via Betterplace.

FORTE CULTURA Tourism Sector

The tourism sector remained one of the core pillars of FORTE CULTURA and continued to evolve in 2025.

Work on the **FORTE CULTURA tourism portal** continued, including the transfer of old fortress portraits to the new site and the integration of new languages. The portal is now available in **German, English, French, Italian, Spanish and Polish**. The integration of FORTE CULTURA clusters into the platform also marked an important step.

The licence agreement with **Actionbound GmbH** was extended, and the offer is already being used by our members.

Two new **Euro Souvenir Banknotes** with the FORTE CULTURA brand were issued in Büdingen.

We also concluded a deal with **Reveel.guide**, opening further opportunities in the field of digital visitor information and storytelling

The development of the online travel sales platform with our partner **Martin Kaule Reisen GmbH** is largely complete, and the new portal can be used by members to market travel and guided tour offers directly.

Interest in the FORTE CULTURA social media channels and in the activities connected with the European Fortress Summer continued to grow.

Board and Scientific Committee

The elected **Scientific Advisory Board** of FORTE CULTURA continued to meet regularly and to discuss measures supporting the development of the network.

One particularly important area of joint work was the preparation of the new application documents for the certification of FORTE CULTURA as a **Council of Europe Cultural Route**. A common working group has been elaborating the relevant material, and this work has become one of the major strategic priorities for the network.

Outlook

Among the priorities visible for the coming period are the continued work on the **Council of Europe Cultural Route certification process** and the further development of thematic and regional clusters as operational instruments of the network.

At the same time, we continue to work towards making FORTE CULTURA a real community, not simply a list of fortresses, but a network with active member involvement, shared identity and visible participation in its communication and activities.

Final Thanks

Ladies and gentlemen,

I would like to express my sincere thanks to all those who contribute to the work of FORTE CULTURA, especially my colleagues on the Executive Board, the members of the Scientific Committee, our office, our active members, and all partners who support the network in many different ways.

The progress achieved in 2025 is the result of dedication, competence and, very often, a great deal of voluntary commitment.

Together, we continue to make an important contribution to the preservation, valorisation and sustainable use of Europe's fortified heritage.

Thank you very much.



Filippo Cailotto

President of FORTE CULTURA e.V.

21 April, 2026