
RECAPTURE THE FORTRESS CITIES

Improving natural and cultural heritage policies



LOCAL ACTION PLAN North-West Region of Romania

2022 – 2023

Summary

PART I – GENERAL INFORMATION	2
PART II – POLICY CONTEXT	3
PART III – CULTURAL HERITAGE WITHIN THE NATIONAL AND REGIONAL CONTEXT	5
PART IV - DETAILS OF THE ACTIONS ENVISAGED	7
ACTION 1. CLUJ CETĂŢUIA FORTRESS GREEN BELT PLANNING	8
ACTION 2. PREPARATION OF CULTURAL ROUTES FOR HERITAGE RESTAURATION, COOPERATION, DIGITISATION AND JOINT PROMOTION.....	13
ACTION 3. BOLOGA HERITAGE ADVISORY BOARD.....	21
PART V. LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	25

Part I – General information

Project	Recapture the Fortress Cities (RFC)
Partner organisation	North-West Regional Development Agency
Country	ROMANIA
NUTS2 Region	North-West Region
Contact person(s)	Ioana Dragoş ioana.dragos@nord-vest.ro , 0040755777039

Part II – Policy context

RFC is an EU Interreg funded project bringing together seven European regions, with the main objective to improve natural and cultural heritage policies. The mix between cultural heritage, urban (and also environmental) planning strategies, complementary tourist attractions and ITC tools can bring an innovative approach in order to benefit and boost the former fortress cities, as well as to create both value and knowledge.

<p>The Action Plan aims to impact:</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Investment for Growth and Jobs programme</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> European Territorial Cooperation programme</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other regional development policy instrument</p>
<p>Name of the policy instrument addressed</p>	<p>Regional Operational Programme 2014-2020 for Romania Regional Operational Programme 2021-2027 for North-West Region</p>

In Romania, the **Regional Operational Programme 2014-2021 (ROP)** is the same document for all the eight Romanian regions, its allocation and implementation being performed at the level of NUTS II, the North-West Regional Development Agency being Intermediate Body for ROP in the North-West Region of Romania.

RFC Action Plan targets the Priority Axis 5 of the ROP 2014-2020, named **Improving the urban environment and preservation, protection and sustainable exploitation/ capitalization of cultural heritage**, enclosing one investment priority:

- **Investment priority 5.1:** Boosting local development by preserving, protecting and capitalizing on cultural heritage and cultural identity.

Some examples of main actions to be funded:

- Restoration, consolidation, protection and preservation of historical monuments;
- Restoration, protection, preservation and realization of interior paintings, frescoes, exterior wall paintings;
- Restoration and remodeling of façade plastics;
- Indoor facilities (installations, equipment and facilities to ensure climatic conditions, fire safety, burglary);
- Equipment for the exposure and protection of mobile and immovable cultural heritage;
- Marketing and tourism promotion activities of the restored landmark, including digitization, within the project.

The priority investment is dedicated to local public authorities (LPAs) and heritage administrators/ managers which would like to protect and provide extra value to their destinations and cultural heritage. The mix between cultural heritage, urban and environmental planning strategies, tourist attractions and ITC tools can

bring an innovative approach in order to benefit and put into value the former fortress cities and to create both value and knowledge.

The exchange of best practices in terms of policy support initiatives to reach these goals will also be capitalized and adopted in order to better support the current remaining cultural heritage infrastructure.

By the date of the elaboration of the current Action Plan, the Priority Investment has been closed, since for the North-West Region there has been a rate of over 300% projects submitted, which were evaluated and contracted progressively. 26 historical monuments have been financed through the Policy Instrument addressed by the RFC project, but those investments began before the start of the RFC project.

North-West Regional Development Agency is the Regional Authority responsible for the ROP policy instrument in the North-West Region of Romania, in its role of Implementing Body. In its role of PP4 within the RFC project, the North-West RDA will closely monitor the impact of the Action Plan on the policy instrument.

Starting from the new programming period, for the first time in Romania, a dedicated **Regional Operation Programme 2021-2027 for the North-West Region** will be applied. The new regional tailor-made ROP for period 2021-2027 has been under preparation and public consultation during 2021 and includes Priority Investment no.7 (PI7) referring to the cultural heritage protection, rehabilitation and sustainable capitalization. North-West Regional Development Agency will act as Management Authority for this program to be finalized and approved by the European Commission and national line ministries during 2022.

The proposed actions within PI7 in both urban and non-urban areas refer to conservation, protection and sustainable and competitive use of cultural and historical heritage, including improved access to cultural and historical heritage objectives.

In Romania there is also a **Strategy for Culture and National Heritage 2016-2022**, which reaffirms the role of culture as a fourth pillar of sustainable development, alongside the economy, social and environmental sectors. The restoration of historic monument buildings, from an architectural and aesthetic point of view, can contribute to increasing tourist attractiveness and the quality of the urban environment. Cultural infrastructure also contributes to increasing the quality of life and the provision of cultural services.

The elaboration of RFC Local Action Plan (LAP) is based on the Interreg Europe template, on the Regional Analysis of the Heritage Sites elaborated in the framework of the project, on the methodology of the RFC project, with the contribution of the most important actors in the field of cultural heritage from North-West Region of Romania, the Local Stakeholders Group (LSG) of the project. LSG consists of representatives of 30 organizations relevant to the cultural heritage in the North-West Region, representing local public authorities acting as administrators of monuments, decision making bodies but also as potential funding sources, museums, universities and research institutes, NGOs and associations – acting in the cultural sector.

Part III – Cultural heritage within the national and regional context

The North-West Development Region of Romania is one of the eight NUTS II regions of Romania, being a part of the historical region of Transylvania. The North-West Region has a population of 2.568.730 inhabitants (13.08% of Romania's population) and consists of six counties: Bihor, Cluj, Maramureș, Bistrița-Năsăud, Satu Mare and Sălaj. From an administrative point of view, the region has 43 cities and towns, 403 communes and 1752 villages, while the 8 Development Regions in Romania are not administrative units but mainly for the use of European Funds purposes.

While 47,5% of the population lives in rural areas, urban areas are covering 14.27% of the region with a total of 1.348.485 inhabitants. The highest population concentrations are in the urban areas, with the highest levels in Cluj-Napoca (332.108 inhabitants, 4th on national level), city which adds around 78.000 of students (with high percentage of non-residence). Including the metropolitan area, Cluj-Napoca is the home for almost half a million people, which place it the second urban agglomeration in Romania after the capital, Bucharest, which statistically has over 2 million inhabitants. The region is one of the most ethnically-diverse in Romania. The regional ethnic structure consists of Romanians (75%), Hungarians (18.3%), Roma (4.6%), Ukrainians (1.3%) and Germans (0.3%).

The North-West Development Region is set on a key point of the macro-region of the lower Danube course. Actually, this area represented and still represents an extension of the contact point between central Transylvania and the Western Plains, position that delivered an extremely rapid historical evolution during almost all, main chronological periods of history. From prehistorical periods, fortresses and open settlements are present in the area, but late on, the Roman Empire sets up its frontier on the alignment of the Meses Mountain, closing in this way the north-western line of the Dacian Province. During the great migrations, we are able to see through archaeological traces the vehement presence of the Gepidic kingdom, but later on the Hungarian conquerors are making their appearance as well, during the 11th century. From this later moment on, most of the fortified centers are built, including fortification of the cities. The 16th century, during which the independent Principality of Transylvania is established, is the moment, when most of the renaissance constructions are elevated, mostly due to the resources found on territory of Transylvania, and used in international commerce.

Nowadays there are 4480 historical monuments, visible or hidden in the North-West Region. Many of them face important challenges in terms of gradually deteriorating their physical conditions (including the quality of the cultural heritage sites or related activities, which is considered poor by their visitors). A good part of the monuments requires preservation, protection or investment(s) for their development and capitalisation by inclusion in tourist circuits. Monuments of national or universal interest (type A) and those included in the UNESCO World Heritage List should be a priority in the process of protection and rehabilitation.

From all the historical monuments in the region, we can link the following to the RFC project: **13 Roman Castra** and **41 medieval fortresses, towers, bastions, walls and citadels**, which are not all placed in urban landscape. We have extended the concept of the project by going beyond urban, rural ancient settlements being of outmost importance as well.

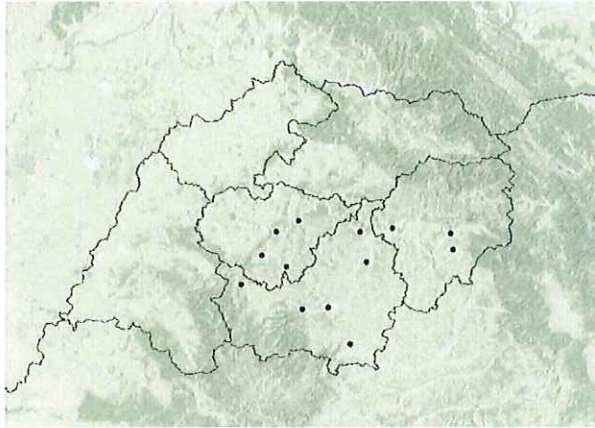


Figure no.1 Main 13 Roman Castra in the NW Region

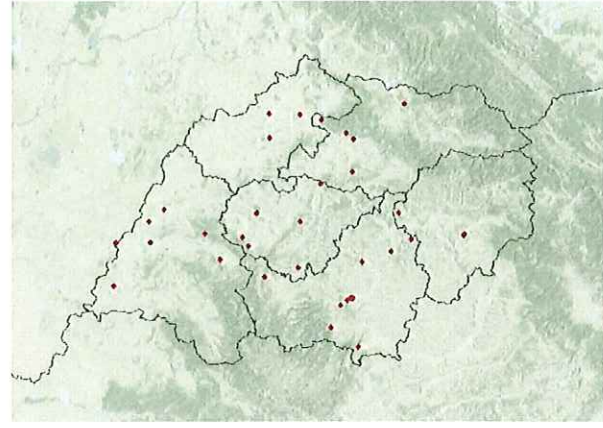


Figure no. 2. Main 41 Ancient fortresses in the NW Region

The roman province of Dacia Porolissensis is set on the frontier of the empire "Limes", leaving behind military and civilian objectives. From the 11th century onwards, as Transylvania got under the administration of the Hungarian Kingdom, the resource rich province has helped the development of an immense fortification infrastructure, thus the fortified cities of Cluj, Bistrița, Satu Mare, Baia Mare (royal mint).

The Regional Analysis performed within the RFC project presents in detail the targeted heritage objectives, as well as their status, financing so far and plans for future rehabilitation and revitalisation. A SWOT analysis performed revealed the most stringent investment needed at the level of the North-West Region. Coupled with the best practices learned from RFC partner regions, the proposed measures of the LAP were elaborated, in close cooperation with the North-West Region LSG.

Part IV - Details of the actions envisaged

The content of the RFC Local Action Plan is anchored in two main actions performed in Stage 1 of the project:

1) **Local and national exchange of information and documentation**, as for the elaboration of the analysis of the heritage objectives in the North-West Region, embedded into the European and national framework, trends and data, enclosing a mapping of main objectives, coupled with the needs, challenges and solutions pointed out by the representatives of the Local Stakeholders Group through a regional SWOT analysis stemming from local and national transfer of experience and from the exchanges during LSG meetings.

2) **Interregional exchange of experience** occurred during the exchange of best practices, during the field visits and Interregional Thematic Workshops organised by the partner regions, where Agency's team and representatives of the Local Stakeholders Group participated and witnessed directly the benefits of the successful initiatives and realized also the possibility of adopting and sometimes adapting the best practices to local heritage environment.

The following actions are targeted to be implemented during the period August 2022 – July 2023, performed by local stakeholders, mostly from the RFC LSG, supported and monitored closely by the RFC team of the North-West RDA.

The proposed content of the RFC Local Action Plan is anchored in RFC partner regions good practices and experiences and is divided in three main actions:

- ❖ **Green fortress belt planning under heritage rehabilitation**
 - Rehabilitation project inspired from RFC partners best practices in terms of urban planning and nature-environment integration
- ❖ **Cultural Routes for heritage restoration, cooperation, digitisation and joint promotion**
 - Integrated digital promotion and/or restoration of fortresses and Roman Castra/ Forts
- ❖ **Fortress Advisory Board for integrated management, investment planning and revitalisation strategy**
 - Setting up a Heritage Advisory Board for Bologna Fortress and Bologna Roman Fort/ Castrum

ACTION 1. Cluj Cetățuia Fortress green belt planning

1. The interregional learning background

Within the RFC project, successful examples of green restorations techniques within an integrated urban planning were identified and deepened in three of the RFC partner regions/ countries. These successful examples acted as inspiration for planning a next heritage restoration project to be initiated in the heart of Cluj-Napoca, Romania.

These are the inspirational examples coming from Belgium, Czech Republic and Germany:

a. Lillo Fortress and green management (Belgium)

Lillo is one of the oldest fortresses around Antwerp. It was built around 1580, having a great importance for the military control of shipping. As a result, it was often besieged, the fort getting in the hands of many nations across the centuries. The restoration stages of the Lillo Fortress were based on a

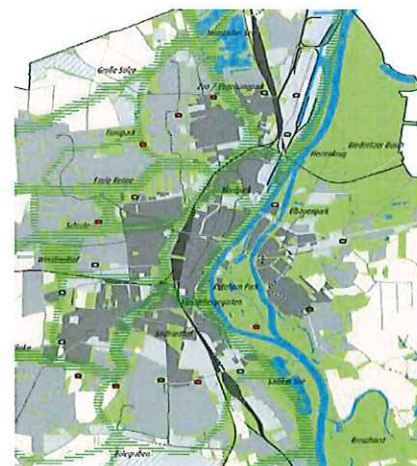


committed [Masterplan of the village \(the Sigmaphan\)](#), in which the restoration and preservation of Lillo fortress was the focal point, due to its touristic importance in the area. Besides the preservation of the architectural heritage, the restoration included controlling and using for touristic purpose the surrounding river but also a renewal of the green spaces to turn it into a pleasant park in the benefit of both the local community and tourists.

The Romanian team, together with stakeholders, have been visited physically the Lillo Fortress at the beginning of the project, before the pandemic. The way of transforming such fortress from a small village, based on a minutious planned and assumed MasterPlan of the area, was truly inspirational for programming future investments and for committing both the authorities and the community around it.

b. Urban Planning – Green Fortress Belt (Germany)

The Municipality of Magdeburg has incorporated in the urban planning of the city the development of a green area connecting the remaining of the city fortress, in a shape of a green belt, planning leisure and sightseeing areas, for both tourism and heritage revitalisation. The Green Fortress Belt project is currently being developed by the city of Magdeburg, Germany, to connect the remaining fragments of the former fortress system, including the fort



belt, through an attractive and exciting network of (cycling) paths and thus make them recognisable and experienceable again as a coherent system.

This approach will be closely followed by the planning of the revitalisation of the Cetățuia Cluj Fortress Hill, closely integrated into the urban planning of the city and surrounded by a green belt.

c. Terezin Fortress restoration & revitalization (Czech Republic)

Terezin is the perfect example of a strategic restoration project of old military fortress in the middle of the city, leaving the war legacy behind and embedding the story telling into green revitalisation spaces of various use. The restoration project, co-financed from ERDF, helped saving and maintaining the unique historic cityscape, protected by the Czech law. Some of the restored buildings are hosting now museums and exhibitions dedicated to the history of Terezin fortress and some others are hosting sport facilities (riding hall) or are used as administrative buildings (Artillery Barracks). The project focused on safe and maintenance of the unique historic urban landscape and the re-use of a part of historic buildings in the social and cultural life of the town, integrated by a green Vauban belt.

Especially the restoration within the green planning can act as inspiration for restoration projects in the North-West Region of Romania.



2. The regional background for the proposed action

Cetățuia Cluj Fortress Hill, the quasi-Vauban shaped fortress above the city of Cluj-Napoca, (was built during 1715-1735, with the aim of usage as a military garrison that was set above the city. During its short use, the building served as prison and public office building as well, until the mid-19th century. Unfortunately, a large part was destroyed during the communist period, when a hotel was built on the hilltop, where the fort was set. The area is currently surrounded by an unexploited area.

Cluj-Napoca Cetățuia Fortress Hill will be one of the heritage investments in the North-West Region of Romania for the next period 2021-2027, returning to the local community an outstanding sightseeing area for leisure activities, following the sustainable urban planning of the city. Now the fortress area offers a green buffer for the city, its open walls hosting a park and social activities. Following an international architectural contest, Cluj-Napoca Municipality, member of the Local Stakeholder Group, is preparing the feasibility study for the financing opportunities to come. The investment planning takes into account best practices from RFC partner regions described above, including creating a green leisure surface/ fortress belt and having a Fortress Management Plan once the area will be rehabilitated.



3. Actions

The action consists of preparation of the technical documentation, architectural plans and project writing and submission of the Cetățuia Cluj Fortress rehabilitation project to the first call of proposal to be launched within the ROP 2020-2027, programme to be managed by North-West RDA as Management Authority.

Inspired by the RFC best practices on green restoration applied to heritage, based on green integrated Masterplans, Cetățuia Cluj Fortress technical documentation will be prepared taking into account these techniques, Cluj-Napoca Municipality being one of the active members within the RFC LSG.

The documentation includes:

- Preparatory studies for the feasibility study
- Documentation for obtaining the technical approvals from competent authorities
- Feasibility Study

The documentation will be prepared until 31/12/2022 and will be ready for submission when the ERDF financing for rehabilitation will be launched through the Regional Operation Programme 2021-

2027, Priority Investment no.7 on cultural heritage protection, rehabilitation and sustainable capitalization.

The preparation and submission of this investment project under development will happen in Phase 2 during the monitoring of the Action Plan, representing an improvement of the ROP policy instrument, consisting in the preparation of the pipeline project.

4. **Players involved**

- **Cluj-Napoca Municipality**

Cetățuia Fortress is in the property of Cluj-Napoca Municipality, which administrates the area. Cluj-Napoca Municipality will prepare the investment project and will contract the technical expertise required for enclosing reconstruction and revitalization plans and will monitor the implementation of the works.

- **Transylvania Architects Order (OAR Transilvania)** involved in providing an integrated green urban planning and architectural solutions [OAR is also part of the RFC LSG]

Fortresses integrated green planning should be an example for other municipalities as well, having under management heritage sites. Other players could be for example Ardud Municipality (from Satu Mare county), Salaj County Council (for Porolissum sites) or Poieni Local Council (for Bologa heritage sites, including Bologa Fortress and Bologa Roman Castrum).

5. **Timeframe**

The preparation of the technical documents and the project proposal will cover the LAP monitoring period (August 2022 – May 2023). The deadline for the technical documentation is end of December 2022. The project with the mature technical documentation will be submitted for the first ROP open call, estimated to open between 11/2022 – 04/2023.

In a later stage, after the end of the RFC project, if the project will be awarded to receive funding from the ROP 2021-2027, the rehabilitation works will be carried out for at least 2 years, ensuring sustainability of the project actions.

6. **Costs**

The preparatory technical documents for the investment project, financed from TAOP is of 379.000 EUR

7. **Funding sources:**

The action enclosed in the RFC Action Plan, namely the preparation of the technical documentation for the Cluj Cetatua Fortress rehabilitation project will have two funding sources:

- Main funding source: **Technical Assistance Operational Programme (TAOP) 2014-2020**, managed by the Ministry of Investments and European Projects, through the Open Call

dedicated to local authorities to prepare mature pipeline projects to be funded by next programmes from 2021-2027.

- Co-financing by **Cluj-Napoca Municipality**, as project applicant

In a later stage, Cetățuia Cluj Fortress will be prepared by Cluj-Napoca Municipality by submitting an investment project within the urban areas part of the ROP programme, which has a proposed allocation of 30,788 M € for the whole region. The infrastructure rehabilitation project will be submitted to the Open Call from the **North-West Regional Operation Programme 2021-2027**, First call for proposals, which will run under competitive basis, is envisaged for the end of 2022, once the North-West ROP will be approved and validated and once the NWRDA will be officially appointed as Managing Authority for the programme.

The Priority Axis 7 will fund actions in the field of heritage, in both (urban and non-urban) areas that will include conservation, protection and sustainable and competitive use of cultural and historical heritage, including improved access to cultural and historical heritage objectives.

The activities likely to be funded are:

- Restoration, consolidation, protection, conservation, historical monuments and immovable cultural heritage, including the acquisition, restoration, consolidation, protection, conservation of specific equipment;
- Modernization/rehabilitation of historical monument buildings with cultural functions such as libraries, museums, theaters, etc., including the acquisition, restoration, consolidation, protection, conservation of specific equipment;
- Complementary activities necessary to ensure the functionality of the interventions carried out, activities with a cumulative value of maximum 15% of the total value of the project: rehabilitation, modernization of roads or access roads to the investment (except county roads and national roads), extensions, landscaping on the site of the historical monument.

ACTION 2. Preparation of Cultural Routes for heritage restoration, cooperation, digitisation and joint promotion

1. The inter-regional background

The concept of heritage routes is anchored in history and had proved its impact along centuries. It is shown to be a rich and fertile one, offering a privileged framework in which mutual understanding, a plural approach to history and a culture of peace can all operate. It is based on population movement, encounters and dialogue, cultural exchanges and cross-fertilization, taking place both in space and time¹. The protection and promotion of these cultural heritage routes require skilled management and, more particularly, careful control of the level of tourism affecting them, as well as the participation of the inhabitants and public authorities living in the lands over which the routes cross.

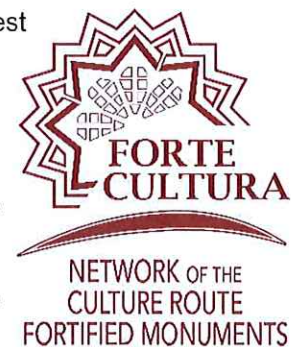
A heritage route is composed of tangible elements of which the cultural significance comes from exchanges and a multi-dimensional dialogue across countries or regions, and that illustrate the interaction of movement, along the route, in space and time.

In the recent years, technology development in the field of research, imagery, virtual and augmented reality, scanning and presentation of different sets of information have developed. With a merge of creativity, the experience of visiting an old heritage attraction might be significantly increased, bringing it to a totally new level.

In this respect, these are the main RFC partners' best practices that have inspired us and our LSG members to initiate integrated collaboration and actions:

- **FORTE Cultura - Cultural Rute (Germany)**

The Cultural Heritage of Fortified Monuments is one of the strongest associations in Europe promoting an integrated model between heritage and tourism, now present in many countries. The Culture Route FORTE CULTURA takes you into the fascinating world of historic fortified monuments. Its member pursues the goal of supporting the diverse architectural and cultural heritage of fortified monuments, promoting their change to places of culture and tourism and raising awareness among the general public. Designing cultural routes for connecting heritage sites in Romania is a best practice that will be embedded in the current programming period, since the National Recovery & Resilience Plan has already included the possibility of such financing to be happening during 2022-2023.



¹ Report on the Expert Meeting on Routes as a Part of our Cultural Heritage (Madrid, Spain, November 1994)

- **FORTENGORDELS – Cooperation of fortresses (Belgium)**

Fortengordels is a network of the fortresses around Antwerp, also better known as the Fortress Belt (inner and outer circle) built between 1859 and 1914. The area includes in total 35 fortresses and 12 ramparts spread over 26 municipalities.

Fortengordels is a unique platform, performing integrated management of the fortresses, prioritizing actions and joint projects, attracting funding opportunities, providing joint communication strategy and tools and ensure an integrated touristic approach and large-scale events. Created and managed initially by the regional authority in Antwerp,

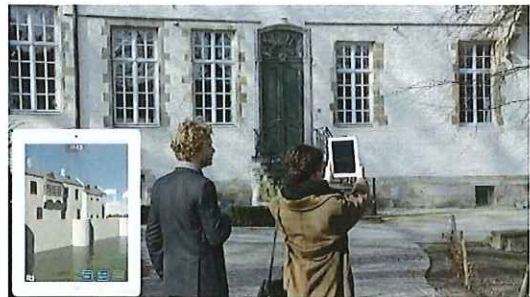
progressively the management has been given to a participatory community approach to the Fortress Community – a private-public partnership leading in time to an organized structure.

This best practice was introduced in the first RFC Study Visit in November 2019 and then presented again during our virtual partner meeting in Terezin.



- **Visual dimension – Battery Aachen virtual reconstruction (BE)**

Battery Aachen is the only preserved coast battery from the WW I in Belgium, located at Raversyde, a village on the outskirts of Ostend. It was a military unit built by the Germans who invaded Belgium in the summer of 1914.



The conventional guided tours, understanding and interpretation of heritage and storytelling could be improved with the help of VR and AR technologies, which could help in virtual reconstruction of a site, based on available sources of information, such as old pictures and plans. Also, real-time virtual reconstructions/ 3D models could be rendered for a better understanding of a historical monument or attraction.

Many other Belgium heritage sites have been complemented by the virtual reality, in terms of:

- 3D virtual reconstruction & digital restoration
- Interaction with 3D digital heritage (TimeLine, TimeGate)
- Interactive storytelling for digital heritage (TimeFrame, TimeScope)
- Synchronised smartphones and tablets for guided tours.

- **The White Tower – Hradec Kralove (CZ)**

The White Tower is the highest landmark of the city (72 m), offering visitors a unique view of not only Hradec Králové, but also the remote peaks of The Krkonoše and The Orlické Mountains. In recent years the tower came back to life with many exhibitions and became the centre of tourism and cultural events. The restoration of the tower took about 9 years, including the research. The latest reconstruction allowed the installation of a modern audio-visual technology that offers countless possibilities for amusement and education. On the [official website of the tower](#), potential visitors can see 3D images from different spots of the tower, also adapted to VR headsets. Also, on the spot, virtual holograms of the former aspect of the tower are displayed.



- **Tourist guide app (CZ and DE)**

Terezin Fortress from Czech Republic is mostly known for the WW2 and now, the municipality is presenting to its visitors the old story of Terezin, dating back to the 18th century, which is almost forgotten.

The Municipality of Terezin together with the Ministry of Culture, financed a tourist guide app which tells the both stories of the fortress.

Smart Guide app fits perfectly in the Covid-19 pandemic times, social distancing being an important thing to consider also later on.

City of Magdeburg in Germany has a similar App, connected with different attractions. Once arrived in the specific spots, the visitors can play relevant videos about Magdeburg, including the video about the Magdeburg fortress.

SmartGuide app turns a traveler's phone into a convenient personal guide



- **Bardejov Fortification (SK)**

Bardejov has the most sophisticated system of medieval fortifications in the Presov Region. The development of technology in the field of research, scan/ capturing and presentation of the information is helping a lot in the process of presenting and promotion of a destination. Augmented Reality (AR) could bring a lot of possibilities in the field of tourism, education and



entertainment. In some attractions of Bardejov Fortification, the classical presentations are complemented by AR. Also, main artefacts founded following the archaeological findings in Bardejov were fully scanned to be able to create and present their digital models, in different environments, using QR codes. Nowadays, the content for the future wide use of AR in tourism is prepared.

- **Dresden Fortress – Virtual Reality experience (DE)**

After getting into the old Dresden fortress by the elevator, its visitors will get a pair of headphones and a player. Along the indoor route, there are 25 checkpoints, each of them presenting the information by using 360* projections and 3D audio technology, to discover the history of the attraction: <https://www.festung-xperience.de/>



- **Medieval virtual trips (ES and BE)**

The Aragon experience in Spain was shared through the virtual tour of the Peracence Castle, in Teruel Province, as a genuine example of professional virtual tour, with many features to be replicated, such as map and air view, outdoor and indoor detailed elements:



https://www.aragonvirtual.es/panotours/castillo_peracense_medieval/

The Belgium experience brings it to an upper level, with features enhanced by digital twin and covering the whole city of Mechelen from Flanders, including some remainings of the medieval fortress, such as the Brussels Gate:



<http://www.virtueelmechelen.be/>

2. The regional background for the proposed actions

The North-West Region of Romania hosts 4.480 historical monuments, of regional and national or international interest.

Most of those are in an advanced state of degradation and require restoration, rehabilitation or conservation. They are strongly related to our culture and should be preserved for our future generations.

But there are others which have been restored over the years and now need revitalisation and proper promotion in order to generate progress in the local communities. It is important that these heritage objectives to be developed in synergy with Cultural Routes, to perform an integrated management and joint promotion and to benefit from latest digital technologies.

The RFC team has ensured the transfer of knowledge and best practices from project partner regions, towards the members of the Romanian LSG which own and manage heritage sites. Also, informed them in detail about the forthcoming investment and joint promotion opportunities, to be prepared within PNRR, in relation to the Cultural Routes to be designed. During the LSG meeting organised in January 2022, RFC team detailed the funding sources and analysed together with the LSG members the regional the pipeline projects to be developed.

According to the importance of heritage sites, the potential of their localisation and the planning investment in the North-West Region of Romania, the following heritage sites will be prepared for joint promotion, digitalisation and/ or restauration within Cultural Routs initiative to be funded from Next Generation EU recovery financial package.

Three heritage sites, with great tourist potential, are placed in the rural area in a circle of 40 km from Cluj-Napoca, being connected to the big city with good accessibility by car. Each of these fortresses belong to the rural local authority of each correspondent village.

- **MOLDOVENEȘTI FORTRESS**

It is the first early medieval fortification in Transylvania that was mentioned in the written sources, in 1075 (Turdawar Castrum/ Fort). The position of the fortress gives it a strategic importance: above the gorge of Arieș Valley, that was used to transport gold from Roșia Montană gold mines in the Western Carpathians. After the Tartar Invasion (1241-1242) it lost its importance, but its role as county center was taken over by the city of Turda. Currently, the fortress ruins require excavation and archeology sites.



- **BOLOGA ROMAN FORT / CASTRUM**



Dated from year 106, this ancient heritage site has been perfectly preserved underground, situation stated by archeology sites that confirmed and scanned the area with state-of-the-art technology. The castrum is located on the LIMES Frontier of the Roman Empire and has a national importance of Class A heritage. The technical

documentation for the restoration of this heritage site has been prepared few years ago when trying to obtain funding from ROP 2014-2020. As the property issue was solved in the meantime, an update of the documentation would allow the project to be re-submitted for the proper financing programme in the next period. Within the RFC project we have organized one of the LSG meeting onsite in the summer of 2021, bringing archeologists, engineers, project development and the local authority to revive the restorations plan, based on best practices analyzed in the RFC partner regions.



- **BOLOGA FORTRESS**

Bologa Fortress from Poieni rural commune, in Cluj-County, was rehabilitated from EARDF rural funds during 2014-2020 in the North-West Region of Romania. This historic location is ready to open doors and host community and touristic actions, for both their promotion and economic sustainability. One of them is the recent rehabilitated **Bologa Fortress**. One meeting of the [LSG was organised in 2021 there](#), to analyse



the revitalisation perspectives of the historic place, through the experience of the project partners and in view of the cultural route preparation, following the models from RFC project.

The digitalisation level in the North-West Region of Transylvania is under development, enhancing continuously the heritage sites being reflected in a virtual manner.

Two examples which were realised due to RFC project, with the occasion of organising the hybrid Study Visit in Transylvania in October 2021, are two virtual tours exploring two heritage objectives in the region based on digital twin technology, shared also as best practices:

- Tailor's Tower in Cluj-Napoca, part of the medieval city fortress: <https://my.treedis.com/tour/turnul-croitorilor>
- Oradea Fortress, heritage site rehabilitated using ERDF REP Programme: <https://my.treedis.com/tour/cetatea-oradea>

The virtual tours have been inspiring for our foreign partners, including gaming features real movement and information points provided in English language for main features of both the locations.

Two other virtual tours will be produced during 2022 after the rehabilitation of the heritage objectives, financed from ROP 2014-2020 under two projects currently under implementation by two member organisations of the RFC LSG:

- Firemen's Tower – monument of XVI century, part of Cluj medieval defence fortress [Cluj-Napoca Municipality]
- Reduta Palace - monument of XVI century, [Ethnographic Museum]

Other virtual tours are in place and managed by museums in the region, such as [LIMES – Roman Frontiers Virtual Tour](#) from Transylvania National History Museum or [CLIO HIGH TECH](#) Expo from Zalău County Museum of History and Arts, both visited by the RFC partners during the study visit in October 2021.

From the point of view of the digital skills and digital infrastructure, several members of the LSG have strong assets in developing further digital projects for bringing heritage objectives to virtual life, such as: Technical University of Cluj-Napoca [AI and Robotic Department], Zalău County Museum of History and Arts (MJIAZ).

Two IT Clusters from the North-West Region, orchestrating two corresponding Digital Innovation Hub (DIHs) are widely recognised at European level, having being awarded with the Gold Label by the European Secretariate for Cluster Analysis. More than 200 IT SMEs are digital service providers close by.

3. Actions

Inspired by the RFC best practices on integrated promotion and rehabilitation under the Cultural Routes, but also from the digital features the promotion might have, coupled with funding sources to be available in Romania for revitalization of heritage, these 2 fortresses and 1 roman fort/ castrum have been included in April 2022 in the funding list for rehabilitation and/or joint promotion, following the submission made from the local authorities managing the heritage sites, also as a result of the intra-regional interactions and call dissemination within the RFC LSG meetings.

The action consists in preparation of the technical documentation for the rehabilitation of Porta Pretoria in case of Bologa Roman Fort/ Castrum and of preparation of an integrated marketing plan and dissemination materials for the digital platform for the 3 heritage sites that will be included in two cultural routes to be financed from the Romanian Resilience and Recovery Plan: the Roman Forts Cultural Route and the Fortresses Cultural Route.

The submission and implementation of at least these three projects to be financed from NRRP, following the preparatory work and call dissemination within RFC LSG meetings, will represent an improvement of this new policy instrument, as project portfolio prepared in the North-West Region of Romania. The preparation of the technical and economic documents for preparing the investments will happen in Phase 2 during the monitoring of the RFC Action Plan.

4. Players involved

- **Poieni Local Council in case of Bologa Roman Castrum and Bologa Fortress**

Bologa Roman Castrum and Bologa Fortress is located in Bologa village, on the property of Poieni Commune.

- **Local Council of Moldovenești**
Moldovenesti Fortress located in Moldovenesti Commune, in Cluj County
- **Transylvania National History Museum (MNIT)** for experts, technical endorsement and contribution to the historical related activities
- **Consultants, architects, archaeologists, engineers** to be contracted for the preparation of the technical and projects related documents

Based on the RNNP subsequent open calls, other local authorities can act as players for the integrated promotion of the heritage sites, such as Cluj-Napoca Municipality (for Cetatuaia Cluj Fortress), Oradea Municipality (for Oradea Fortress).

5. Timeframe

The activities to be carried out would cover LAP monitoring period, namely August 2022 – July 2023.

Action	Planned Timeframe
Contracting the RNNP accepted projects	April – August 2022
Elaboration of the technical documentation for infrastructure projects (works inventory and estimated costs, feasibility study, technical project)	May 2022 – September 2022
Elaboration of the management plan for each heritage objective	August 2022 – March 2023
Preparation of the promotion materials for the integrated marketing plan and for the virtual reality platform and app	August 2022 – May 2023
Procurement procedure for the infrastructure works	March 2023

6. Costs

- **Bologa Roman Castrum** – 7,000 EUR (updating the existent project preparatory documents)
- **Bologa Fortress** – 30.000 EUR (management plan and promotion costs)
- **Moldovenești Fortress** – 20,000 EUR (revitalisation and promotion actions)

7. Funding source:

National Recovery and Resilience Plan (NRRP) – Pilar IV Social and Economic Cohesion, Component 11. Tourism and Culture.

This new program, belonging to EU Next Generation Initiative was recently launched at the level of the EU in order to balance the negative effects of the pandemic, addressing main national sectors. NRRP includes, in the case of Romania, Tourism and Culture in Pilar IV Social and Economic Cohesion. Approved by EC at the level of Romania in October 2021, a PNRR Action Plan was launched at the beginning of 2022, including the design of several cultural routes, among which the Route of Roman Forts/ Castra and the Fortresses Route.

12 cultural routes will be financed from NRRP, with a budget of over 100 mil EUR. A national selection to be performed during 2022 will select the most representative objectives, of tourist importance, introducing them in the national tourist circuits. Two of the routes are strongly related to heritage: THE FORTRESSES ROUTE and THE ROMAN FORTS ROUTE. The financing may be for joint promotion activities and inclusion into a joint digital platform or also for rehabilitation.

The two fortresses from Cluj County and Bologa Roman Fort have applied to be included for funding in such specific route. The funding will cover both the rehabilitation of the heritage site and the promotion in case of the Roman Fort, while the two fortresses will benefit from funding for promotion and will be displayed in the digital platform and app to be developed at the national level.

The program foresees as a final and overlooking result, the building of a national tourist route mobile application, that will include objectives already promoted, alongside the ones that have been restored during the program. So, the foreseen mobile application will contain objectives from all 12 routes (e.g. Roman Forts, Fortresses, Castles, Curias, wooden and fortified churches, traditional gastro-regions, vernacular architecture, etc.), with information on each and every objective, historical and contact data, VR or augmented reality.

ACTION 3. Bologa Heritage Advisory Board

1. The inter-regional background

In the previous programming periods, several historical monuments were financed to be restored, reconstructed or preserved. In some cases, they encountered management issues, in a relatively short period of time. A way to increase their administrative capacity is to receive advice from multidisciplinary experts in a formal way and to carefully plan the resources needed for an efficient management but also for a revitalization strategy that would allow the inclusion of the heritage site in the local community life and in the tourist circuits.

Based on the exchanges of RFC best practices, the following examples were considered best practices that could be adopted in Transylvania, by heritage administrators or by associations in charge of management and revitalisation of such monuments.

a. Magdeburg Fortress Advisory Board

A consultative expert group advising the state capital Magdeburg as fortress local administrator for synergy in planning investments, urban development, documentation and publications. The advisory board advises the city's councillor for urban development, construction and transport and provides guidance in the form of written recommendations on how to achieve this goal.

b. Change of defence barrack into a “culture fortress” – Magdeburg (DE)

The idea of the project was to create a cultural and a meeting place as an interface between the city and its universities, by preserving a former Prussian Defensive Barrack (revival of Magdeburg as a cultural and university city).

Revitalization concept involve:

- Diversified cultural activities (concerts, theatre, film, art exhibitions, readings, student parties)
- Gastronomy business (supplement of the culture business, gastronomic accompaniment of banquets and other events)
- Banquet business and letting the space for events (fairs, markets and parties in the courtyard, tourist attractions (theatre spectacle)
- Offer and mediation of service/services (interior design, event concepts, support)



With the help of actively involved citizens, the fortification is developing into a new cultural centre, a tourist attraction and an educational place for locals and tourists. The initiative keeps the memory of the fortress walls alive through “living history”. This experience is achieved through the authenticity of the place itself as well as through re-enactment and historical presentations. The interplay between conservation of the monument and cultural use strengthens the public perception of this cultural heritage and complements the cultural offer in the city.

c. Event/ cultural service/ tourist product: Live the Castle (Spain)

The idea of the project is to bring the public to a closer experience on how people lived back in history in a castle, [Peracense](#) in the Province of Teruel. Historical recreation or re-enactment has emerged as a very useful methodology in the dissemination of heritage in general, and of castles & fortified enclosures in particular. When a fortified compound is set with reconstructed items, characters, and artifacts from the past, it comes to life. The visitors can better experience the structure itself, the related activities, the interior, costumes, weapons, armour etc. In the same way, it allows to know more technical aspects, such as combat formations, defence tactics and even more complex concepts such as the supply of a castle in times of war, its construction phases or the life as it was. At present, this resource is widely used in Europe, and it stands as one of the most accurate tools for interpreting heritage. It is almost always accompanied by a professional cultural dissemination program that includes specific educational programs, guided tours, exhibitions or workshops for the general public. It is possible to bring history and heritage closer to the public and especially to children, making them know how to appreciate those heritage values, by learning history.

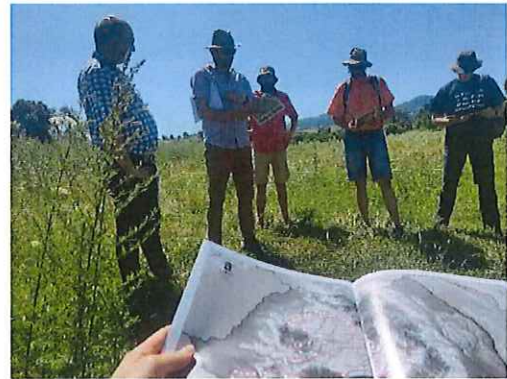
The re-enactment activities are usually held during a weekend at the beginning of August and, occasionally, during specific weekends and long weekends during the year.

It is extremely successful, since the entire weekend the castle receives about 4,000 visitors, taking into account that the population of the town of Peracense does is of almost 100 inhabitants..



2. The regional background

A small commune such as Poieni Commune from Cluj County hosts two major heritage sites: Bologa Roman Fort and Bologa Fortress recently partially rehabilitated from EARDF funds. In order to be able to capitalize and valorise the historical assets in a professional manner, Poieni Local Authority will need to be supported by constant advice. The local stakeholders group meeting was organised in July 2021 at Bologa, gathering different technical expertise at the heritage locations and meeting the Mayor of the Poieni Commune. The meeting approached learning from past activities but most important analysing and planning next investments and revitalisation activities and exploring next opportunities. Inspired from the German best practice, the expert group could be formalized and turned into a constant reliable expertise for the local authority.



3. Actions

Establish Bologa Heritage Advisory Board as a formal partnership between Poieni Local Authority as owner and manager of Bologa fortress and Roman fort, and experts/ organisations with a consultative role for future investments, technical solutions and revitalisation strategy of the heritage objectives. The Advisory Board will include expertise such as: urban planners, architects, archaeologists, constructors, but also marketing and tourism experts. A Management and Marketing Plan need to be elaborated to pursue steady planned stages for the development of the heritage sites.

Two yearly meetings are planned for the Bologa Advisory Board, with a detailed planned agenda in advance.

The action will improve the management of the heritage site and consequently the local community policy related to heritage, culture and economic development.

Following the recommendations from the Board, a heritage revitalisation event will be organised in the summer of 2022 as Bologa Fortress Day, planning reenactment activities, involving the local community and attracting tourists.

4. Players involved

- a. **Poieni Local Council** – owner of the Bologa Fortress and Bologa Roman Fort
- b. **National History Museum of Transylvania** – appointed members part of the Advisory Board
- c. **Transylvania Architects Order** - appointed members part of the Advisory Board
- d. **Cluj County Council/ Chief architect of the county** – member in the Advisory Board and allocate potential funding for Bologa Fortress Day, under social community events
- e. **NGOs, tourism agencies** – contribution to marketing plan and revitalisation actions

The integrated Fortress Advisory Board is a successful management example that can inspire other local authorities as well, especially ones that have under administration several heritage monuments, such as Salaj County Council (for the Porolissum Castrum extended area) and Oradea Municipality (for Oradea Fortress and connected heritage sites), for an effective urban/rural planning, having as focal point the respective heritage sites.

5. Timeframe

The activities to be carried out would cover LAP monitoring period, namely August 2022 – May 2023, most probably during the summer and early autumn due to favourable weather conditions, in case of the revitalisation events.

6. Costs

Costs estimation for the action:

- Organisation of two sessions of the Bologa Heritage Advisory Board – 400 EUR (costs for organisation of the meetings)
- Elaboration of a Management and Marketing Plan for Bologa heritage sites – 2500 EUR
- Organisation of the Bologa Fortress Day/ Weekend – 3.000 EUR (costs for organisation of the event at the fortress)

7. Funding sources:

Local authorities' funds: Poieni Commune for the organisation of the Advisory Board semestrial sessions, for the elaboration of the Management and Marketing Plan for Bologa heritage sites and for organisation of Bologa Fortress Day. Cluj-County Council as contributor for Bologa Fortress Day.

Part V. List of Abbreviations

AFCN - National Cultural Administration Fund
AR – Augmented Reality
CZ – Czech Republic
EARDF – European Agricultural Regional Development Fund
ERDF – European Agricultural Regional Development Fund
LAP – Local Action Plan
LPA – Local Public Authorities
LSG – Local Stakeholders Group
MNIT – Transylvania National History Museum
NGO – Non-Government Organization
NRRP – National Recovery & Resilience Plan
NWRDA/ North-West RDA/ the Agency – North-West Regional Development Agency
RFC – Recapture the Fortress Cities
ROP – Regional Operation Programme
TAOP - Technical Assistance Operational Programme
VR – Virtual Reality

Date: 25/02/2022

Signature: **SANDA LIVIA CĂTANĂ**
Interim General Director



Stamp of the organization: