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PRESERVATION BY DEVELOPMENT OF SUSTAINABLE STRATEGIES FOR A BETTER PROTECTION OF THE UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE SITES FROM ROMANIA

project presentation

ARGUMENT — Romania signed the UNESCO Convention in 1990 and has just seven properties part of World Heritage List, as follows: the Danube Delta (1991; natural site), Churches of Moldavia (1993; fig. 2), Monastery of Horezu (1993), Villages with Fortified Churches in Transylvania (1993; fig. 3), Dacian Fortresses of the Orăștie Mountains (1999; fig. 4), Historic Centre of Sighișoara (1999), Wooden Churches of Maramureș (1999; fig. 1), and **Ancient and Primeval Beech Forests of the Carpathians and Other Regions of Europe** (2017; natural site). Fifteen other properties are included in the Tentative List. Every six years, Romania, as a states party, is invited to submit to the World Heritage Committee the periodic report on the application of the World Heritage Convention. These reports are done periodically, but most are just a formality without any strategic development and sustainable management plans (despite the specific Romanian legislation addressing this issue). There is, accordingly, an acute necessity for a national report of evaluation of the UNESCO cultural sites in Romania. Another issue concerns the significant discrepancy between the visibility and importance given to different sites included in the World Heritage List. All these problems could be prevented through better monitoring and management methods, while regional cooperation could be a driver for identifying the best solutions. As such, we need a critical approach that starts with a discussion on a **Policy Document for World Heritage Sites preservation and promotion**, and establishing a model for heritage management according to the needs and specificities of not only of each existing site, but also of those on the tentative list.

OBJECTIVES — The main goal of the project is to identify and set up innovative models of good practices, adapted to the local cultural and social-economic specificities, for safeguarding and managing the Romanian UNESCO World Heritage Sites. The specific objectives are: (1) To develop an expert and representative team with an extended professional network, which will investigate the issue of best practices for World Heritage Sites preservation and sustainable management and transfer of knowledge, for improving the situation in Romania; (2) To assess the real state of the World Heritage Sites from Romania, identify the main problems and find adequate solutions for better preservation and promotion. (3) To develop an efficient communication mechanism between academic, administrative, civil society and local communities for sustainable preservation and management of World Heritage Sites from Romania; (4) To propose solutions for the improvement of the existing situation, specifically to put forward a Policy Document for preserving the status of the UNESCO sites in Romania, and accompanying sustainable site management plans; (5) To share the knowledge and experience on good preservation practices with colleagues from other European countries, and to prepare a **joint European project for the Horizon 2020 competition**, with a concrete socio-economic impact (from new technologies, to tourism and cultural industries) of the WHS from Central-Eastern Europe.

TEAM MEMBERS — The project will be achieved by means of a multi-disciplinary approach with respect to the critical analysis and evaluation of the cultural World Heritage Sites from Romania. The common and specific criteria will be discussed and applied according to the Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention. The project team was selected as to meet specific criteria (experts and young scholars, regional representativeness, and gender balance). Three working groups were created, and the main duties of the members were assigned according with their areas of expertise and field of research: (1) Archaeological heritage (**Sergiu Musteață** (project manager), **Alexandru Popa**, **Vitalie Bârcă**); (2) Architectural heritage (**Ioana Irina Iamandescu**, **Adrian Crăciunescu**); and (3) Communication and dissemination (**Stefan Caliniuc**, **Elena Cozma**). The working group is coordinated by the PM, who on a parallel level benefits from the assistance of a board of external advisors, which will be selected as to be as regionally representative as possible, and to cover in terms of expertise all the facets of UNESCO and ICOMOS preservation practices.

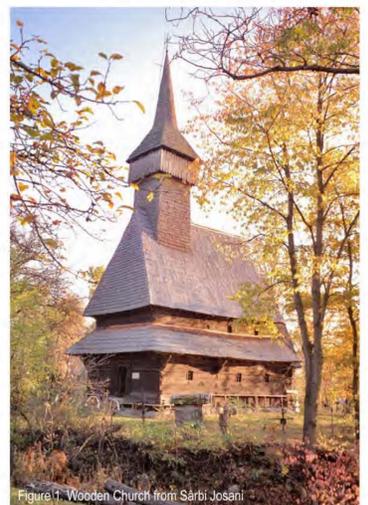


Figure 1. Wooden Church from Sârbi Josani



Figure 2. Painted Church of the Suceava Monastery



Figure 3. Fortified village of Biertan



Figure 4. The temple of Sarmizegetusa

CALL FOR PARTICIPATION!

International Conference
*Past for the future and future for the past:
preservation and promotion of the World Heritage Sites*
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