



## Fortifying regions with bastions of culture

Old fortresses, representing the history of empires, regions and cities, are part of central Europe's cultural heritage. Properly managed, these monuments provide the surrounding area with benefits for urban and cultural development while bringing in tourism. Forte Cultura helps regions get more out of their local fortified heritage and connects these sights in a transnational cultural route.

Central Europe is well fortified: There are many preserved fortifications, fortress systems and relics of old forts spread throughout our regions. This extraordinary military architecture, only some of which have UNESCO or national protection, dramatically illustrate the history of former empires and preserve local heritage. They are part of what makes central Europe unique and attractive. Individual regions can benefit from better marketing, management and commercial exploitation of old fortresses. Meanwhile, central Europe as a whole benefits from the preservation of these bastions of culture and heritage.

The Forte Cultura project seeks to help cities use their fortified heritage as a cultural resource, to foster sustainable economic growth, cultural and social development – and the competitiveness of cities. The project partners help regions deal with obstacles that prevent proper exploitation of the fortifications. By turning historical sights into positive factors encouraging development, it also helps prevent their destruction. The project has initiated a transnational expert discourse on transferring best practices, so that successful uses of fortifications like the one in Hohensalzburg, Austria, which has UNESCO protection, can show the way forward

Fortifications are part of humankind's history and a great resource for education. Furthermore, they can add significant value to local economies if managed well for use by visitors.

Milagros Flores, President of International Scientific Committee on Fortifications and Military Heritage (ICOFORT)

for fortifications in places like Josefov in the Czech Republic, Kostrzyn in Poland, or Lviv in Ukraine.

### Eight forts incorporated into cultural route

The project is developing the potential of fortresses in Kostrzyn nad Odra in Poland, Kronach and Erfurt in Germany, Salzburg in Austria, Jaromer in the Czech Republic, Komarom in Hungary, Verona in Italy and Lviv in Ukraine. The fortifications in these territories represent different eras of history and different styles of fortification architecture. The partners share their expertise and experience to help ensure that the fortifications are well-preserved and that they provide their full potential as centres of culture, art, tourism, leisure and entertainment. Optimum development of the fortifications helps to integrate these ancient structures into the modern cities that surround them, and turns the fortifications into important centres for public life. At the same time, new marketing strategies make use of the fortifications as a means to attract tourists, who help support the regional economy. Along with making each individual fortress more attractive, the Forte Cultura process helped to enhance the attraction of all the forts together by uniting them in the Forte Cultura cultural route. The route connects fortifications in the corridor between the Baltic and Adriatic seas and promotes them with cultural events, entertainment and offers of active tourism. The new Forte Cultura route helps to strengthen the financial viability of fortified heritage, while building the economies of fortress cities and their regions. After the project's end, the transnational networks and improved regional capacities for exploiting local culture will remain essential to integrating central Europe's fortified heritage into modern life.

- 50 Fortifications are currently interested in joining the Forte Cultura cultural route
- 500 Approximate number of fortifications in central Europe
- 90 Percentage of fortifications that are undercapitalised for preservation



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