



MONOGRAPHIC PUBLICATION OF ICOMOS SLOVENIA

03

Management of Cultural Heritage Sites

Upravljanje območij
kulturne dediščine

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Editorial

The topic of the third volume in the Monographic Publications series of ICOMOS Slovenia is the management of cultural heritage sites. This monograph is a way to commemorate the European Year of Cultural Heritage (EYCH), which was celebrated in 2018, and to relate to the central EYCH starting-points that underlined the significance of awareness-raising about cultural heritage belonging to all of us and the necessity to promote cultural innovation and collaboration of people and communities, while fostering commitment to responsible and sustainable tourism with cultural heritage.

The central thought when selecting the articles was borrowed from Donald Insall: “Good planning is only good management.” Insall underlines that successful conservation and active life of cultural heritage sites are a consequence of a careful and interdisciplinary planning of development activities, taking into account the features of heritage to develop its potentials in a balanced way, including the economic and tourist opportunities of these sites. This book presents the management processes and also insight into the diverse set of approaches and successful practices, particularly in Southeast Europe.

There are eight chapters in this book. The introductory article was prepared by Jelka Pirkovič, where she presents contemporary concepts of heritage management. This is followed by four articles on the challenges of managing and governing heritage sites in Slovenia. Špela Spanžel discusses the implementation of UNESCO cultural heritage in Slovenia, and Nataša Kolenc talks about the challenges of private-public partnership in built heritage restoration. Tomaž Golob’s article provides a theoretical overview of participatory management of urban areas of cultural heritage, using several Slovenian cases as examples, while Vlasta Vodeb reports about best practices related to the use of historic building information modelling (HBIM) methods in managing and monitoring historic building areas.



NATAŠA KOLENC

Revitalizing Historic Buildings through Public-Private Partnership Schemes – Rihemberk Castle Pilot Project

SUMMARY

Rihemberk Castle represents one of four pilot cases included in RESTAURA project – Revitalizing Historic Buildings through Public-Private Partnership Schemes, co-financed through Interreg Central Europe programme in the years 2016–2019. The project was supported to develop and test useful models for Public-Private Partnership (PPP) implementation in revitalization of historic buildings in Slovenia and other Central European countries.

Rihemberk Castle, the pilot case chosen in Slovenia, is one of the mightiest and oldest castles in the country. It is located in Branik, in the Municipality of Nova Gorica (West Slovenia). The castle is owned by the Municipality of Nova Gorica, a local self-government body.

Rihemberk is undeniably culturally significant and has an explicit development potential. Nevertheless, it was abandoned and closed for public for decades. The reasons were similar as for many other built heritage sites in Central Europe, also owned by public institutions: the lack of a stable, long-term development vision, the lack of money for restoration and revitalization, and the lack of knowledge in planning, designing, financing, building, marketing and other connected sectors, together with political reasons, caused long-term neglect of many built heritage sites.

The RESTAURA project plan and instructions helped the Municipality of Nova Gorica to go through an efficient preparation process for castle restoration and revitalization – with key stakeholders' involvement, determination of the future castle use, technical documentation and legal and financial analyses preparation to make the castle ready for further development steps, including financing and revitalizing the ones using PPP schemes. Even though RESTAURA did not include any investment finances, it stimulated and wisely directed (relatively) small financial investments from different sources, directed to minimal improvement and protection of cultural monument structures, but also programmes for visitors. This enabled the castle to open its door for the public in 2017 and keep on as a live, fascinating and desirable culture heritage site. Municipality of Nova Gorica's experience with Rihemberk Castle can be a useful example for other public institutions to revitalise and manage their built heritage in a more sustainable way.

Revitalizacija zgodovinskih stavb s pomočjo shem javno-zasebnega partnerstva – pilotni projekt Gradu Rihemberk

POVZETEK

Grad Rihemberk je eden od štirih pilotnih primerov, vključenih v projekt RESTAURA – Revitalizacija zgodovinskih stavb s pomočjo shem javno-zasebnega partnerstva, ki se sofinancira v okviru programa transnacionalnega sodelovanja Interreg Srednja Evropa v letih 2016–2019. Projekt podpira razvoj in testiranje koristnih modelov izvajanja javno-zasebnega partnerstva pri revitalizaciji zgodovinskih stavb v Sloveniji in drugih srednjeevropskih državah.

Grad Rihemberk, ki je bil izbran kot pilotni primer v Sloveniji, je eden najmočnejših in najstarejših gradov v Sloveniji. Grad leži nad Branikom, v Mestni občini Nova Gorica (zahodna Slovenija), ki je kot lokalni samoupravni organ tudi lastnica gradu.

Rihemberk je brez dvoma spomenik kulturnega pomena in ima znaten razvojni potencial. Kljub temu je bil opuščen in več desetletij zaprt za javnost. Razlogi za to so bili podobni kot pri drugih območjih grajene dediščine v Srednji Evropi, ki so v lasti javnih ustanov: pomanjkanje stabilne, dolgoročne razvojne vizije, pomanjkanje denarja za obnovo in revitalizacijo, pomanjkanje znanja iz načrtovanja, oblikovanja, financiranja, gradbeništva, trženja in drugih povezanih področij, vključno s političnimi razlogi, ki so povzročili dolgoročno zanemarjanje številnih območij dediščine.

Načrt in navodila, pripravljena v okviru projekta RESTAURA, so Mestni občini Nova Gorica pomagala pri učinkoviti pripravi prenove in revitalizacije – z vključevanjem ključnih deležnikov, določitvijo prihodnje rabe gradu, tehnično dokumentacijo in pravno-finančno analizo, da bi grad tako pripravili za nadaljnje korake v razvoju, vključno s financiranjem in revitalizacijo ob uporabi shem javno-zasebnega partnerstva. Čeprav projekt RESTAURA ni vključeval investicijskih sredstev, je spodbujal in pametno usmerjal (relativno) majhne finančne investicije iz različnih virov, namenjenih minimalnim izboljšavam in varstvu kulturnih spomenikov ter tudi programov za obiskovalce. Tako je grad leta 2017 vrata znova odprl za javnost, kot živo, zanimivo in zaželeno območje kulturne dediščine. Izkušnje Mestne občine Nova Gorica z gradom Rihemberk lahko pomagajo drugim javnim ustanovam pri obnovi in upravljanju grajene dediščine na bolj vzdržen način.

1 Introduction

The project Revitalizing Historic Buildings through Public-Private Partnership Schemes (acronym RESTAURA) was one of the projects co-financed through the Interreg Central Europe program in the period 2016–2019. Interreg Central Europe is a European Union (EU) cohesion policy programme that encourages co-operation beyond borders. It supports public and private organizations to work together across Central Europe to improve cities and regions in Austria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Poland, Slovakia, and Slovenia.¹

The funds in EU financial perspective 2014–2020 were concentrated in four fields, identified as the ones to need most support in order to reassure sustainable development in Central Europe: Innovation, Low Carbon policies, Culture & Environment, and Transport.

The RESTAURA project was funded inside the Culture & Environment field, under the priority Natural and Cultural Resources. This priority was concentrated in valuing the environment and culture in Central Europe by protecting and sustainably using natural and cultural heritage and resources that are subject to increasing environmental and economic pressures as well as usage conflicts.²

It was conceived as a reaction to the situation in Central Europe, especially in former socialist and communist countries, with many cases of built heritage in decayed condition and not enough financial and other sources available to preserve them. As described on the official project webpage, “the lack of accessible financial resources is one of the key problems for most governments in the protection and maintenance of their cultural heritage. This issue is of particular importance to the Central European region, where the turbulent history and the geopolitical reconfiguration resulted in a large number of neglected or abandoned historic buildings, which have been suffering from ongoing decay. These buildings are often connected to deprived areas with economic and social problems which require immediate intervention.

¹ Interreg Central Europe programme 2014–2020 introduction. Available online: <https://www.interreg-central.eu/Content.Node/home.html/>.

² Priority Natural and Cultural Resources description. Available online: <https://www.interreg-central.eu/Content.Node/Environment.html>.

RESTAURA project is aiming at identifying, testing, evaluating and promoting good practice on the use of Public-Private Partnerships (PPP) for the revitalisation of historical cities and buildings. PPP allows organisations to combine the unique assets and skills of the public and private sectors to protect heritage resources. With limited public resources available for this purpose (e.g. national and EU funds), the involvement of private financing and expertise through PPP is the only alternative to save and provide ongoing management to the unique built heritage of Central Europe. Until now, there have only been a few examples of PPP used in revitalisation projects within Europe, RESTAURA's aim is to promote a real change for the better in the use of PPP across Central Europe (innovation)."³

Slovenian Rihemberk Castle was included in the RESTAURA project as one of four pilot cases – four examples of cultural heritage sites in need of restoration and revitalization. It was joined by Bigatto palace pilot location in Buzet, Croatia, historical Salt Square and waterfront areas in Nowy Dwór Mazowiecki, Poland, and Konventna Residence in Bratislava, Slovakia.⁴

Despite Rihemberk's undeniable cultural significance and development potentials it was abandoned and closed for public for decades. The reasons were similar as for many similar built heritage sites in Central Europe, in many cases owned by public institutions: the lack of a stable, long-term development vision, the lack of money for restoration and revitalization, and the lack of knowledge in planning, designing, financing, building, marketing and other connected sectors, together with political reasons, which caused long-term neglect of much of built heritage.

Working on pilot cases was an essential part of RESTAURA project, with the primary aim to promote and include the PPP model in the built heritage revitalization sector – especially in Central Europe countries such as Poland, Slovakia, Croatia and Slovenia, where the PPP model in heritage revitalization had little or no practical implementation.

The cost of all activities performed for Rihemberk Castle inside RESTAURA project was 204,960.00 EUR (Municipality of Nova Gorica project partner's budget). Municipality's own participation was 30,744.00 EUR. The rest was financed by the European Regional Development Fund, under the Central Europe Transnational Cooperation Program 2014–2020. The whole budget of the project was 2,086,281.50 EUR, covering the activities of 11 partners in 4 Central European countries.⁵

3 RESTAURA project introduction. Available online: <https://www.interreg-central.eu/Content.Node/RESTAURA.html>.

4 RESTAURA project pilot locations description. Available online: [https://www.interreg-central.eu/Content.Node/Pilot-leaflet-\(ENG.-ver.\).pdf](https://www.interreg-central.eu/Content.Node/Pilot-leaflet-(ENG.-ver.).pdf).

5 RESTAURA project general information on project poster. Available online: <https://www.interreg-central.eu/Content.Node/C.1.3.pdf>.

2 Rihemberk castle pilot case presentation

Rihemberk Castle, a relatively large built heritage complex, was included in RESTAURA project as a pilot case to test the possibilities of public-private partnership schemes (PPP) implementation in built heritage revitalization in Slovenia. For years, the castle had a bad reputation as a hard case for restoration and revitalization, caused by its relatively big size, badly damaged structures and large amount of finances calculated to be necessary for castle's restoration. The unsuccessful attempts of the castle restoration and revitalization in previous decades were additionally discouraging



The castle is located on a hill above the village of Branik, between the Vipava valley and the Karst plateau. It is part of the Municipality of Nova Gorica, located in south-western Slovenia, bordering Italy. The owner of the castle is the Municipality of Nova Gorica, a local self-government body, which obtained the castle free of charge from the previous public owner, the Republic of Slovenia, on the basis of negotiations and the contract signed in 2013.

Fig. 1: Rihemberk Castle, a culture heritage complex included in RESTAURA project as a pilot case in Slovenia. The view from south-west in 2017 (Photo: D. Bizjak).

Rihemberk Castle, as many other historical buildings, represents an interesting "time capsule" telling stories of remote past, but also revealing the facts and realities Europe had to deal with in more recent history, up to present days. The castle, as we know it today, was probably built in the first half of the 13th century by lords of Rihemberk (Reiffenberg), a noble family of South Tyrolean descent, coming to Goriška region to serve Counts of Gorizia. Castle's beginning is

often connected with the year 1230, mentioned in written documents regarding Rihembergians in Goriška region.⁶

The medieval castle was not the first building standing on the hill Golac above the Branica valley: the location on the passage from the Vipava valley – a gateway to Central Europe, to Karst plateau and further towards the Adriatic Sea, was inhabited long before the arrival of Rihembergians. In the same location archeologists found remains of a prehistoric settlement dating back to years 1700–900 B.C., in late Bronze and Iron Age. The reasons why the prehistoric inhabitants of now Western Slovenia found the location attractive were probably the same as the reasons that made the first Rihembergians build their castle there in the Middle Ages: the place had a stable water source, it was quite easy to defend, and it provided a relatively safe retreat for its owners escaping from enemy tribes first or other invaders and enemies later. It also provided good visual control over surrounding territories and it enabled control of a passageway providing income from taxes and trade.

After the extinction of the Rihemberk noble family in 1371, the castle and its surrounding property were returned to Counts of Gorizia, higher feudal lords. Around the year 1530 Rihemberk Castle came into the hands of the Lanthieri family, marking the beginning of a new era which lasted for almost 400 years.

Throughout the centuries the Lanthieris changed the medieval fortress into a luxurious Renaissance and later Baroque palace, with residential buildings, a chapel, a great hall and a library, which made the castle known as a kind of a cultural centre of the area. The basic medieval fortification concept of the castle remained, together with the mighty castle tower erected in the late 13th century, integrated in the Renaissance, Baroque and later building transformations. The last major changes of the castle structures happened in the late 19th century, with the neo-gothic additions meant to give the old castle a more medieval appearance.⁷

The early 20th century brought two world wars, which influenced strongly the castle's future. The Great War marked the beginning of a difficult century for the Rihemberk Castle. As part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire fighting on the nearby Soča/Isonzo frontline with Italians, the castle was taken away from the Lanthieri family in 1915 to become a military hospital for Austro-Hungarian soldiers. Stone built structures of the castle remained mostly untouched, but most of the castle interiors, including furniture, the library, archives, paintings and other art objects were taken away, burned or permanently lost in other ways by the end of World War I.

After the war, the castle was returned to the Lanthieri family and used as a temporary residence of Lanthieri family members, coming there regularly from the nearby town of Gorizia/Gorica. That situation did not last long. With the beginning of World War II in 1941, the castle got the role of a military structure again, hosting occupying Italian and German soldiers. The end of World War II saw Rihemberk Castle almost completely destroyed, burned and mined by local

6 Sapač, I. (2011). Grajske stavbe v zahodni Sloveniji – Kras in Primorje (pp. 99–100). Ljubljana : Viharnik.

7 Ibid., pp. 102, 140–154.

Partisans in July 1944, after conflicts with German and local collaborating soldiers.⁸ It was not an isolated case: similar destruction happened to many other castles, palaces and similar historical buildings in Slovenia – representing old times, former rulers and former elites. Such attitude was caused by the new post-war political reality in Slovenia, which was part of the communist and later socialist Yugoslavian state.

The restoration of the badly damaged Rihemberk Castle started right after the war, by the Lanthieri family and with the help of the Anglo-American temporary government, which governed the territories along the present Slovenian-Italian border before the official border line between two states was finally set in 1947. In that year the castle was nationalised, reparation works stopped. In the years that followed, the castle became a kind of a stone mine for local residents, whose houses were damaged or destroyed by German soldiers during the war and also the source of material for other people.⁹ Looking like an old feudal castle and representing a kind of a “class enemy” in a new socialist Yugoslavia, it was destined to disappear completely.

To stop a complete devastation of the eminent castle and start healing its war and post-war wounds, it was formally declared a cultural monument (around 1952). Intensive restoration works started in 1961, under supervision of the Slovenian monument protection service.¹⁰ In the decades after World War II several plans for castle restoration were prepared, with restoration works partly executed, but never finished to the point that would allow the castle buildings to be used again. In the decades that followed, Rihemberk Castle and other most important heritage buildings and sites in Slovenia got the status of cultural monuments of national importance, the highest status on the national level. Further on, in 1999, they were all declared the property of the state, the Republic of Slovenia, with the aim to assure better care for this endangered heritage.

The action unfortunately did not bring the desired results in the form of properly restored and well-managed culture heritage sites. Slovenian government had to look for new solutions. To reduce an unmanageable number of heritage sites managed by the state and to open the possibilities to find other options for cultural monuments preservation and revitalization, in 2011 the Ministry of culture prepared the list of culture heritage sites owned by Republic of Slovenia to be sold on the market. The Rihemberk Castle was among them.¹¹

8 Ibid., pp. 154. Kronika Rihemberka – Branika, zbornik strokovnih prispevkov s področja arheologije, zgodovine in umetnostne zgodovine. Branik: Krajevna skupnost, Kulturno društvo Franc Zgonik.

9 Sapač, I. (2011) Grajske stavbe v zahodni Sloveniji – Kras in Primorje (pp. 156). Ljubljana: Viharnik.

10 Zavod za varstvo kulturne dediščine Slovenije, Restavratorski center (2018) Branik – Grad Rihemberk, Konservatorski načrt, Mapa 1. Ljubljana: Zavod za varstvo kulturne dediščine Slovenije, p. 65.

11 Odlok o načrtu ravnanja s stvarnim premoženjem države za organe državne uprave, pravosodne organe, javne zavode, javne gospodarske zavode, javne agencije in javne sklade za leto 2013, p.10489. In: Uradni list RS, no. 101/2012. Available online: <https://www.uradni-list.si/glasilo-uradni-list-rs/vsebina/2012-01-3855/odlok-o-nacrtu-ravnanja-s-stvarnim-premozenjem-drzave-za-organe-drzavne-uprave-pravosodne-organe-javne-zavode-javne-gospodarske-zavode-javne-agencije-in-javne-sklade-za-leto-2013-odrsodu13>.

The intention of selling the castle provoked revolt in the Rihemberk Castle local community. It forced local politicians and the Municipality of Nova Gorica to start negotiations with the Ministry of Culture representatives about taking Rihemberk off the list and keep it in public ownership, for public uses. The process ended in February 2013 with the signing of the contract between the Republic of Slovenia and the Municipality of Nova Gorica. Municipality became the owner of the castle complex free of charge, but with the contractual obligation that it would start the restoration of the castle by the year 2018 and open a completely restored castle to public by 2023.¹²

The basic problems of Rihemberk Castle, i.e. the lack of financial resources, a feasible development plan and the right subject to execute it, didn't go away. They were simply passed from one public body to another, each hoping to manage "the castle problem" in a more efficient way. The bad news that came soon after was about the expected financing of the whole project: since the beginning of a new European Union financial perspective in 2014, Slovenia was no longer entitled to apply for co-funding of bigger projects with the primary intention of investments in built heritage restoration.

In 2014, the Municipality of Nova Gorica had the castle, the deadlines, but no real chance to find any major financial sources to invest in the large Rihemberk Castle restoration. But the project could not stop there again. In the years following the contract signing, the Municipality of Nova Gorica, with the collaboration of the team of local representatives from Branik, made the first financial and technical documents, which represented the basis for future planning. The municipality also developed the so-called Rihemberk Castle safety plan¹³ to determine which areas could be treated as safe for visitors without substantial investment. The Safety Plan allowed first improvements on the site, intending to prepare the site to the point to be ready for opening to the public and bringing it back to the life of the community.

At the same time the Municipality of Nova Gorica started to apply to different EU tenders, to facilitate further preparation of the Rihemberk Castle for future investments and search for new ways of solving the "Rihemberk problem". That's how the Municipality of Nova Gorica became a partner in the Interreg Central Europe project Revitalizing Historical Buildings through Public-Private Partnership Schemes (RESTAURA project), opening the possibility for including private sector's financial and other sources to restore and revitalise the built heritage – an idea almost completely undiscussed before in the Slovenian cultural heritage sector.

¹² Pogodba o neodplačnem prenosu kulturnega spomenika Branik – Grad Rihemberk, z dne 5. 2. 2013, with annexes.

¹³ Stolp d.o.o. (2015) Project documentation, Grad Rihemberk – Varnostni načrt (Rihemberk castle – Safety plan).

3 Rihemberk Castle Baseline Situation In The First Stages Of Restaura Project

In 2016, at the beginning of RESTAURA project, the castle was still closed to public and not ready to accept visitors, with first cleaning and safety interventions done. One of the first actions to be achieved in the RESTAURA project was the so-called Current Status Report preparation, with the suggested topics to be checked and studied for all pilot locations included in the project. The task proved to be essential for taking competent decisions in the phases that followed.



The aim of RESTAURA's Current Status Report was to understand the cultural heritage site as well as possible, find, know and use all previous documents, plans and other sources produced previously in connection to cultural heritage site restoration and revitalization, to prepare basic information and starting points for further steps. The Current Status Report included chapters on site description, existing management structure description, existing financial position description and values of the site determination.¹⁴ It made it possible to develop clear conclusions about the actual situation of the heritage site in question, from different points of view.

Fig. 2: Part of the Rihemberk Castle (a chapel on the main castle courtyard) as captured in 2013 (Photo: Municipality of Nova Gorica).

¹⁴ Instructions about preparing the documents were included in the Current Status Report Manual, an internal document prepared by RESTAURA partners, to be used by the four owners of pilot buildings included in the project.

Forming the RESTAURA Local Stakeholders Group (RLSG) was the next logical step in gathering more useful information regarding the Rihemberk Castle, identifying new opinions and discussing conclusions developed in the previous RESTAURA phase. To achieve as high a consensus as possible and to remove as many conflict situations as possible, as early as possible, simultaneous negotiations started with the most important stakeholders involved in the castle's future. Following the RESTAURA expert team instructions, 10–15 chosen stakeholders were invited to join the group. They came from different institutions and backgrounds, with different views and interests regarding Rihemberk Castle future.¹⁵

The main reason to work inside the stakeholders' group was to face and confront different views and interests, exchange information and discuss them from different points of view directly, with the subjects involved sitting in the same room at the same time. By avoiding (only) individual consultations the process becomes far more efficient and time saving. Formal meetings of the people involved helped also to establish less formal conversations and collaboration, which made things easier in further steps.

Inside three formal meetings of RESTAURA stakeholders' group, all the previous ideas and documentations were explained and discussed, and the weaknesses and strong points of previous ideas were checked among participants. As a result, basic previous ideas and plans regarding Rihemberk Castle, developed in preceding years, were approved – with needed adaptations identified to fit the actual situation (more environmental issues included, etc.). The dynamic of Rihemberk Castle restoration and revitalization had to be reorganised completely: everybody agreed that the task of castle restoration and revitalization cannot be achieved in one package, as planned previously, expecting generous EU money to fund the project. The project had to be re-organised as a step-by-step process.

The most precious lesson at that point was not to stick to unreasonable, over-ambitious ideas (and except doing nothing), but to concentrate more on discovering various solutions, more modest activities that could be completed with the finances and time available, with short-term, visible results.

Discussions with stakeholders and other people involved identified clearly what was the public interest regarding Rihemberk Castle future: most people agreed that the area needs a castle to be developed as a centre of sustainable tourism of the wider Goriška region, with an emphasis on cultural and nature protection content, complemented with other services and activities on offer supporting the local economy. The castle should become a focal point to sell and promote local products and services, it should encourage the employment of locals, especially young professionals. The castle should be recognised, organised, and promoted as one of most important “entry points” of the region from the touristic point of view – the castle should be marketed as the focal point of the area, with the surrounding villages and natural area as an extension.

15 Jelinčič, D. A. et al. (2017). Guidebook for Local Authorities on PPP in Heritage Revitalisation Strategies. RESTAURA project outcome. Available online: <https://www.interreg-central.eu/Content.Node/O.T2.2.pdf>.

The work done at the beginning proved to be very welcome in the further phases of the project. It enabled us to understand the potentialities and identify the conflict situation right from the start.

To structure all the information gathered through field work with stakeholders and to compare new development ideas for the castle with existing development plans at the levels of the Nova Gorica municipality, Slovenian state, and European Union, the document titled the Integrated Built Heritage Revitalisation Plan for Municipality of Nova Gorica and Rihemberk Castle (IBHRP) was prepared.

Generally, IBHRP is a new, although still not widely accepted, governance framework which entails heritage revitalisation planning in relation to a wider strategic urban development context. The “integrated approach” incorporated in IBHRP is three-fold and supports:

- Participatory governance ensuring citizen participation in decision-making and management related to the heritage field;
- Public management of heritage which includes horizontal integration across various sectors and departments, and vertical integration by addressing local, regional and national spheres of government;
- Gradual integration of sustainability aspects into the heritage management which allows managing social and economic dimensions. This includes spatial planning, education, science, tourism, entrepreneurship, employment, etc.

The Integrated Built Heritage Revitalisation plan preparation is generally the first step recommended in heritage revitalisation strategies based on PPP. The integrated plan structure represents a frame, a model that can be used by any other public built heritage owners or managers. It was prepared using Methodology Proposal, prepared by RESTAURA experts. Its contents were summarized in the Guidebook for Local Authorities on PPP in Heritage Revitalisation Strategies.¹⁶

What lies behind Integrated Revitalisation plans? On 6 April 2017 the Council of Europe (CoE) launched its “European Cultural Heritage Strategy for the 21st century (Strategy 21)”. Strategy 21 redefines the place and role of cultural heritage in Europe and provides guidelines to promote good governance and participation in heritage identification and management, and disseminates innovative approaches to improving the environment and quality of life of European citizens. It pursues an inclusive approach and involves not only local, regional, national and European public authorities, but also all heritage stakeholders including professionals, (I) NGOs, the voluntary sector and civil society. The Strategy 21 envisions the promotion of a „shared and unifying approach to cultural heritage management, based on an effective legal framework for the integrated conservation of heritage”.¹⁷ The Strategy 21 is drawn for the next ten years and focuses on the following priorities:

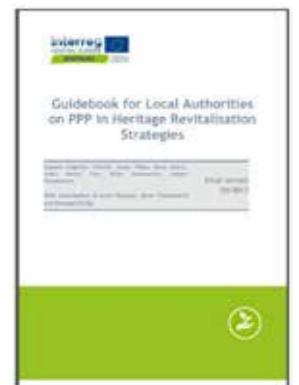


Fig. 3: The Guidebook for Local Authorities on PPP in Heritage Revitalisation Strategies, developed in RESTAURA project as a helping tool for individual local authorities owning historical buildings. The document is available online at <https://www.interreg-central.eu/Content.Node/O.T2.2.pdf>.

16 Ibid.

17 Council of Europe's Strategy 21 description. Available online: <https://www.coe.int/en/web/culture-and-heritage/-/launch-of-strategy-21-european-cultural-e-strategy-for-the-21st-century>.

- the contribution of heritage to the improvement of European citizens' quality of life and living environment,
- the contribution of heritage to Europe's attractiveness and prosperity,
- education and lifelong training,
- participatory governance in the heritage field.

The Strategy 21 is based on three main components:

- 1 The "social" (S) component which sees heritage as the key to promoting diversity, and empowers communities for participatory governance.
- 2 The "territorial and economic development" (D) component stresses the contribution of heritage to sustainable development, based on local resources, tourism and employment.
- 3 The "knowledge and education" (K) component focuses, through heritage, on education, research and training issues.¹⁸

The main principles underlying revitalisation planning and management, included also in Nova Gorica and Rihemberk Castle pilot case, are the following:

- **Responsibility** – communities share responsibility for their heritage;
- **Participation, transparency and inclusiveness** – communities should be involved in planning, managing and enjoying the opportunities heritage offers while promoting transparency and communication in decision-making and evaluation;
- **Relevance** – integrated revitalisation plan addresses the needs of all relevant actors and stakeholders;
- **Functional perspective** – integrated revitalisation plan addresses an area, irrespectively of administrative boundaries considering that impacts on heritage and sustainable development of the municipality focus both on impacts within the municipality's responsibility (involving the private economy and citizens) as well as on the impact of activities of all actors (municipality and stakeholders) on neighbouring municipalities and cities;
- **Continuous evaluation** – results of revitalisation need to be continually measured and improved in order to meet sustainable goals;

18 Jelinčić, D. A. et al. (2017). Guidebook for Local Authorities on PPP in Heritage Revitalisation Strategies. RESTAURA project outcome, p. 6. Available online: <https://www.interreg-central.eu/Content.Node/O.T2.2.pdf>.

- **Strategic orientation** – revitalisation plan needs to be integrated in strategic (political) decision-making and as such be supported in implementation which means that it has to focus on strategic rather than operational issues; therefore, integrated revitalisation plan has to provide a strategic framework for sustainable development;
- **Mainstreaming** – revitalisation plan needs to be organised centrally in the municipality management which means that regular involvement of the central political body in target-setting and evaluation will ensure political commitment, legitimisation and maximised impacts;
- **Decentralised implementation and integration** – the local administration should take the responsibility for coordination of the revitalisation plan ensuring horizontal integration across various sectors and departments;
- **Complementarity** – heritage revitalisation plan takes into account the existing documents and plans provided for other sectors and in line with the development vision and strategic aims;
- **Evolution** – heritage revitalisation plan takes into account the existing experiences and not starting from scratch;
- **Sustainability** – heritage revitalisation plan is a driver of social, territorial and economic development.¹⁹

4 Integrated Built Heritage Revitalisation Plan For The Municipality Of Nova Gorica And Rihemberk Castle

The Integrated Built Heritage Revitalisation Plan for the Municipality of Nova Gorica – with pilot action Rihemberk Castle, was prepared in 2017, including topics as suggested in the Guidebook for Local Authorities on PPP in Heritage Revitalisation Strategies.

The plan covers the description of strategic urban development, strategic framework of integrated plan and the description of the pilot action, i.e. the revitalization of Rihemberk Castle, which represents one of priority investments in the field of cultural heritage of the Municipality of Nova Gorica.

The main purpose of the Integrated Plan is to assist the local self-government in defining sustainable priorities also in the field of cultural heritage. Achieving sustainable development and promoting participatory decision-making are the basic principles the Municipality of Nova Gorica underlined as the basis for its future development.

19 Ibid.

The revitalisation of Rihemberk Castle has been accepted in the local environment as a new major development opportunity for the city of Nova Gorica and the region, which will stimulate development and thus contribute to the prosperity of the inhabitants. The restoration and protection of the castle material structures by itself does not contribute to the cultural and economic development of the area. Therefore, in the process of revitalization of the Rihemberk Castle, the emphasis is put on the programme that will be implemented in the castle complex, as well as in its immediate and wider surroundings. New activities and events in the castle will also affect the economic structure by increasing the share of tertiary activities, creating new business opportunities for diversified services and products. Important advantages will be better tourist supply, the development of supplementary activities on farms, and the increase in the sale of products of surrounding farms (fruit, vegetables, honey, olives, wine, etc.).

The Integrated built heritage revitalisation plan for Nova Gorica and its Rihemberk Castle was prepared in order to search for potential investors, to protect and preserve the cultural heritage, as well as to increase the accessibility of the castle and, consequently, the visibility in the broader environment. The program content and planned activities at the castle are adapted to modern needs and usage and take into account the marketing and development potentials of the area.

Local population and professional institutions in the field of cultural and natural heritage were actively involved in the process of drafting the IBHRP document.²⁰

Beside more general topics discussed during Integrated Plan preparation, one main achievement was obtained: clear and unanimously supported vision for the further castle development, reflecting the public interest. The vision developed served as a “lighthouse” to determine the right short-term steps in the long-term planning of future castle development – not to miss the final goal even if we have to make smaller steps to reach it. The vision of castle’s future development was shortly described as: “Rihemberk Castle, the widely recognised centre of sustainable tourism of Goriška region and the centre of creative practices.”

The vision defined incorporates the public interest which should be integrated in future castle development: it was concluded that Rihemberk Castle should remain widely accessible to the general public, that it should fulfil its formal role as a public culture infrastructure,²¹ by supporting primarily public cultural programmes, without endangering its role as an important shelter for endan-

20 Golja, T., RRA SEVERNE PRIMORSKE d.o.o. Nova Gorica (2017). Celovit revitalizacijski načrt stavbne kulturne dediščine na območju Mestne občine Nova Gorica; Pilotni ukrep: Grad Rihemberk. RESTAURA project outcomes. Available online: <https://www.interreg-central.eu/Content.Node/T2.4.1.1.pdf>.

21 Sklep o razglasitvi gradu Rihemberk za javno kulturno infrastrukturo (2014). The whole castle complex was formally declared a public cultural infrastructure by Nova Gorica City Council in February 2014 – with the consequence that most of castle’s premises and surfaces must be used for cultural programs and culture supporting contents. Available online: <https://nova-gorica.si/zadnje-objave/2014020615463433/>.

gered animal species (part of Natura 2000 protected area). The castle development should also focus on supporting the local communities and local economy, ensuring high quality methods and advanced principles of built heritage restoration. A considerable part of castle development should be focused on cultural and other types of sustainable tourism. But not all. As tourism is mostly a seasonal activity, other, all-year content should complement it. The additional programmes should be primarily linked to artistic or other type of creative practices, education or other forms of business activities that would be compatible with castle’s culture infrastructure status and wide public access, could use the unique ambience of the castle as its strength and could financially support itself through the whole year. The additional programmes taken into consideration were detected through previously expressed interest of potential private investors.

5 Bringing The Castle Back To Life – Now!

The activities did not stop with paperwork. Knowing the final goal (the whole castle restored and revitalised with the described contents) and knowing castle’s realistic (very limited financial) actual situation, it was time to set short-term goals and start to act. The number 1 short-term goal was determined during stakeholders’ meetings: all participants felt the closed castle as a huge frustration, which had to be overcome as soon as possible, after many decades of waiting. People participating were not in favour of the extensive complete restoration work idea with the castle opening to the public in 2023 (at least theoretically, as determined in the contract from 2013). The message was “The castle should be reopened immediately. Let’s do something now!”

Figs. 4, 5: The cleaning of Rihemberk Castle by local volunteers in spring 2017, as a result of good cooperation and participative approach to castle’s long-term revitalization, suggested by RESTAURA project experts (Photo: N. Kolenc).





Cooperation and mutual trust established while working inside the RESTAURA stakeholders' group made it possible that the site was cleaned, with basic safety equipment put in place and physically ready to accept visitors in a few months. Almost all existing interiors and some exteriors had to be excluded from the visiting path for safety reasons. At the same time, primarily non-existing organization structure had to be "invented" and prepared to function, with minimum staff involved and limited available finances spent. It was done with good cooperation between the Municipality of Nova Gorica and the Branik local community, including the work of local NGOs and volunteers.

The result was more than satisfying: the Rihemberk Castle doors, closed for many years, reopened to public on 15 June 2017, with a cultural event designed for the occasion, including artists and local providers with their products and services. The event was attended by approximately 500 people, which exceeded the expectations of the organisers.

Fig. 6: The Rihemberk Castle opening event with around 500 people attending, filling the castle's main courtyard on 15 June 2017 and followed by positive media coverage (Photo: D. Verlič).



Having the castle open to public in not a completely ordinary way, using also provisional solutions to make it accessible, a creative and efficient approach was needed to keep the site operational and welcoming in the months that followed. The additional lesson learned at Rihemberk was to understand the importance of working on multiple fronts at the same time, in parallel, to:

- further improve the physical condition of the castle and its structures (protecting the monument from further decay),
- further improve the visitors' infrastructure, combined with the elements to protect endangered animal species,
- develop more programmes for visitors (castle cultural and natural heritage interpretation), and improve the management structure of the site.

To keep the site alive, in fact already partly revitalised in 2017, it was necessary to invest time and money in smaller, the so-called "soft" activities, linked primarily to more or less permanent services and events for visitors at the castle, to communication and similar activities – costing less than building restoration works, but bringing relatively large benefits in the form of better heritage understanding and acceptance, visitor satisfaction and the personal/expert salaries involved.

Small activities included small repairs of castle structures financed in accordance to owners' (public) budget available. Those interventions were directed to improve the physical condition of the most damaged and most exposed parts of castle's heritage elements.

To speed up the urgent interventions, the Municipality of Nova Gorica applied to several EU and national calls for project proposals to provide additional future funding. In all cases the investments included in the tenders had to be complemented by new programmes for visitors or other "soft" content – relatively easily identified and substantiated, because of the work done in previous

Fig. 7: Repairing the Rihemberk Castle Chapel roof in winter 2017/2018, to protect the most exposed parts of castle's built heritage elements, using owners own (limited) finances (Photo: N. Kolenc).



phases, with the castle's needs known well and the long-term development vision firmly set. In the back of all activities, there was a conscious decision that the limited resources available would be invested in executing urgent reparations works of the most endangered castle structures, but also in maintaining the castle's general physical and organisation condition that allows the accessibility of the heritage site to the public.

Due to the limited time and finances available in 2017, the castle had to be opened to public with almost no cultural and natural heritage interpretation elements prepared and put in place. To compensate for that fact and to offer the visitors at least basic interpretation for understanding and appreciating what they can see at the location, the programmes for guided visits were prepared, local guides trained and guided tours offered to groups of visitors. The aim of guided tours and simple workshops for children and adults was to enable the visitors an authentic and pleasant experience at the castle. On the other hand, offering (payable) guided tours generated the first income, used primarily to pay local guides, which were mostly local residents.

Fig. 8: Local tourists guides and castle's heritage interpreters' training in Rihemberk Castle in May 2017, organised to enable positive visitors' experiences, giving the correct information in an appropriate way, in accordance with the target group chosen (Photo: N. Kolenc).



Some simple printed material was prepared (A5 leaflets), including essential information about Rihemberk Castle and the safety instructions for visitors. With no time and finances to establish a more complex digital communication platform, a simple Facebook page for Rihemberk Castle was established to make the castle known in the digital world as well. Additionally, the Municipality of Nova Gorica's webpage and Facebook page were used for basic digital communication with the public and information dissemination regarding the Rihemberk Castle development. Intensive and constant communication proved to be crucial for keeping the castle alive and constantly present in local community's activities.

Despite the very fundamental and inexpensive communication channels available, the results exceeded expectations: the castle was open to the public on Saturdays, Sundays and Holidays in the summer seasons of 2017 and 2018, al-

together 100 days approximately. In that period, the castle hosted almost 8,400 mostly very satisfied and often surprised visitors from Slovenia and abroad.²²

To encourage people to come to the castle, enjoy its atmosphere and learn about castle's heritage and at the same time speed up communication activities, media presence, etc., some modest events were organised at the castle right from the start. Increased visitor numbers did not bring additional financial income, as the entrance was free of charge. But the positive experience of many visitors and also their better understanding of castle's cultural and natural heritage had other important benefits: the castle was becoming a desired and inspiring location, no longer a negative topic. As a consequence, it started to generate small additional income by renting its spaces for photo shootings, commercials, wedding ceremonies, and similar.²³

Having visitors in the castle, with the chance to get their opinions, expectations, suggestions, was a great way to check the development vision for Rihemberk Castle set in previous stages. The response to the direction chosen was positive, and this information could be used in the next step.

Fig. 9: A kaleidoscope of pictures showing various events and activities happening at the Rihemberk Castle in 2018 (picture taken from the Rihemberk Castle's FB page, prepared by the Municipality of Nova Gorica).



²² The feedbacks from visitors were collected intensively on the site, personally and through digital channels, press, etc., to understand the needs and expectations of real people coming to the castle, inhabitants and other stakeholders important for castle's future.

²³ Events made possible on the basis of contracts signed between the Municipality of Nova Gorica, the owner of the castle, and individual users.

6 Long-Term Planning Documentation For Rihemberk Castle

The next step was to study castle's capacities in even more detail, by checking the possibilities of placing the desired programmes in the existing premises and exterior surfaces available. The test should serve as a good quality basis to prepare useful conservation, technical and investment documentation that would allow efficient further actions.

By understanding the castle's desired and possible functions, these functions had to be located into castle's available premises and surfaces, each with its specific characteristic. An innovative approach, i.e. a tool, was used: in order to facilitate future planning and implementation of restoration interventions, the castle was divided into 10 spatial and functional sections, each designed as a self-sufficient unit that can be restored and used (revitalised) in its own time and financial framework. In this way the castle's restoration and revitalization became a much more manageable process.²⁴

Fig. 10: Overview of the spatial and functional units of Rihemberk Castle, related also to the planned gradual reconstruction of the castle complex, prepared in 2017: 1 Entrance building with Renaissance tower; 2 Western walls with passage; 3 Main courtyard; 4 Northern palatium, connecting building, square tower and chapel ground floor; 5 Northern palatium, connecting building and square tower upper floors; 6 Northern palatium cellars; 7 Castle tower; 8 Southern palatium; 9 South and east walls and plateaus; 10 Surroundings of the castle / area outside the castle walls (Photo: B. Macarol, 2012).



During the preparation of the review, all premises and surfaces were checked, their potentials and weaknesses were identified, as well as the proposed sets of new uses and methods of intervention. In terms of content, the units were defined in a way that their proposed use is compatible with the use of other units. The overview of spatial/functional assemblies included the fact that, for example, certain premises of the castle cannot be used directly for human activities, but must remain isolated as reserves for protected animal species – bats.

The division of castle units opened a new way of thinking regarding potential private investments, which were not limited to the castle as a whole anymore. Private investments, using public-private partnership schemes, could be di-

²⁴ Kolenc, N., Municipality of Nova Gorica (2017) Grad Rihemberk – Pregled prostorsko-funkcionalnih sklopov za načrtovanje gradbeno-tehnične obnove in financiranja revitalizacije grajskega kompleksa (overview of the spatial and functional units of Rihemberk Castle).

rected in one or more sections of the castle, in a feasible extent, with lower financial inputs needed.

The overview of the spatial and functional units of Rihemberk served as a fundamental component in the preparation of the Conservation Plan for Rihemberk Castle, the basic document defining the relevant conservation interventions, where the type of use of built heritage is one of the basic questions to be checked. The preparation of a conservation plan is provided for in Slovenian legislation, i.e. the Cultural Heritage Protection Act (ZVKD-1).²⁵ The Act describes the preparation of a conservation plan in cases of intervention in the architectural monuments when

- the intended intervention on a building or site is complex,
- the interventions threaten to destroy or compromise the protected values, or
- conservation and restoration works must be carried out during the intervention.

A conservation plan should always be required when it comes to interfering with the structural elements of a cultural monument. The content of the conservation plan, the method of its preparation, the form and content of the audit report, and the method of approval of the conservation plan are prescribed by law.²⁶



Preparation of a conservation plan in any complex built heritage is essential, as the investor needs to determine in advance the extent and cost of conservation and restoration interventions on the cultural monument. This was also the case here. The Conservation Plan for Rihemberk Castle was elaborated by Institute for the Protection of Cultural Heritage of Slovenia, Restoration Centre, in August 2018.²⁷ The whole process of Conservation Plan preparation lasted more than one year, but it cleared many questions that would otherwise cause ambiguities and difficulties in further development phases. The Conservation Plan resolved fundamental dilemmas regarding interventions on the cultural monument, which facilitated further planning, technical design and financial planning. The Conservation Plan set out more clearly the limitations within which we can intervene in the castle, and at the same time defined the approximate cost of conservation and restoration works at the castle, which made further financial calculations easier and more realistic.

²⁵ Cultural Heritage Protection Act (Official Gazette RS, No. 16/08, 123/08, 8/11 - ORZ-VKD39, 90/12, 111/13, 32/16 and 21/18 - ZNOrg). Available online: <http://pisrs.si/Pis.web/pregledPredpisa?id=ZAKO4144>.

²⁶ Conservation Plan Regulations, p. 9337. Pursuant to Article 29, paragraph 10, and for the implementation of Articles 29 and 30 of the Cultural Heritage Protection Act (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, nos. 16/08 and 123/08). Available online: <https://www.uradni-list.si/aglasilo-uradni-list-rs/content/93598>.

²⁷ Zavod za varstvo kulturne dediščine Slovenije, Restavratski center (2018). Grad Rihemberk – Konservatorski načrt. Ljubljana : Zavod za varstvo kulturne dediščine Slovenije.

Fig. 11: Rihemberk Castle Conservation Plan – a section including an example of restoration of castle's entrance tower outside surfaces, with the damage described and the way of conservation – restoration interventions suggested (prepared by Zavod za varstvo kulturne dediščine Slovenije, Restavratorski center / Institute for the Protection of Cultural Heritage of Slovenia, Restoration Centre, in 2018).

OZNAKA	POSKODBE
Stolp ob vhodu 1. Baza stolpa	Po celotni površini so močno razraščeni mikroorganizmi in vegetacije. Iz poškodb oz. praznih stikov med gradniki izrašča vegetacija, ki lahko povzroča razpoke in posledično nadaljnje poškodbe (predvsem na bazi stolpa, do loka). Na površini kamna so prisotne črne obloge. Določeni kamni manjkajo. Vidni tudi madeži zamakanja meteorne vode.
MATERIAL, DIMENZIJE	
Kamen (baza stolpa, do polkrožnega kordonskega loka)	
FOTOGRAFIJA (ali NACRT)	
	
POSEG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - odstranjevanje bioloških dejavnikov propadanja (mehanično odstranjevanje vegetacije in mikroorganizmov in odstranjevanje oblog z nizkotlačnim čiščenjem in/ali z vodno paro) - odstranjevanje oblog z nizkotlačnim čiščenjem - večje manjkajoče dele se dopolni v naravnem kamnu (predlagana uporaba ustreznega kamna najdenega na lokaciji – deponiji) - zaprtje stikov z namenom preprečevanja zatekanja meteorne vode in ponovnemu razraščanju vegetacije
OZNAKA ELEMENTOV, SITUACIJA	
	
ŠTEVILO ELEMENTOV	/

The conservation plan, together with the preceding Overview of the Spatial and Functional Units of Rihemberk Castle, including the descriptions of proposed use of individual parts of the castle, was the basis for Concept Design Documentation – architecture designs, which included the technical approach to planning. The drawings of all premises were prepared, defining also the basic equipment needed for future castle functioning. The plans also proposed the solutions to incorporate technical infrastructure, heating and all other facilities necessary for the operation of the complex.²⁸

²⁸ Stolp d.o.o. (2018). Grad Rihemberk – Idejna zasnova ureditve. Technical documentation.



On the basis of particular plans, clearly predicted interventions and measured quantities, a cost estimation of castle's complete restoration was prepared, including all the necessary costs for castle's restoration and revitalization. The proposed works were planned in terms of minimal interventions, in accordance with the doctrines of cultural heritage protection and the situation at the castle.²⁹

Fig. 12: Rihemberk Castle technical documentation – a section of Concept Design Documentation showing the cross-section of castle's entrance tower, with proposed use and technical solutions (prepared by Stolp d.o.o. in 2019).

7 Financial Planning And Future Management Issues

One of the basic tasks within the RESTAURA project was to verify if a site such as Rihemberk Castle, i.e. a cultural monument of great importance, of relatively large size and in a poor physical condition, could be reasonably restored and managed by including public-private partnership schemes. To this end, the data from the Conservation Plan and the technical documentation, with cost estimation, were used to prepare concrete calculations. In addition, legal analyses were done to find out if the proposed solutions, using public-private partnership schemes in built heritage restoration and revitalization, are feasible inside the Slovenian legal frame.

²⁹ Zavod za varstvo kulturne dediščine Slovenije, Restavratorski center (2018). Grad Rihemberk – Konservatorski načrt (Splošne usmeritve). Ljubljana: Zavod za varstvo kulturne dediščine Slovenije, pp. 93–95.

The analyses confirmed that the public-private partnership schemes could provide a very appropriate way of renovating and managing publicly-owned built heritage, especially in smaller and less complex units. Why? The PPP model enables the involvement of private capital and private human resources in the management of publicly-owned built heritage, without taking complete control of the heritage from public hands. A private partner is obliged to include public interest matters in its plans and calculations and, after a certain time period defined in the PPP contract, the restored built heritage is returned to the public owner with no extra charge.

The calculations for Rihemberk Castle were based on five investment lots, combining the 10 previously determined self-sufficient castle units. Each of investment lots was studied and its approximate investment cost was defined. To facilitate the calculations, a maximum contracting period of 33 years was proposed for all investments lots. The necessary revenues that the private partner is expected to generate over the forecast period were calculated in order to cover the investment input, pay all operating costs, and generate approximately 6.5% profit.³⁰

Finančni kazalnik	Vhodno poslojje	Severni palacij	Grajski stolp	Južni palacij	Zunanja ureditev
Potrebni letni prihodki	170.000 €	600.000 €	90.000 €	460.000 €	360.000 €
Neto sedanja vrednost (NSV)	151.003 €	538.656 €	77.135 €	406.988 €	322.585 €
Interna stopnja donosnosti (ISD)	6,63 %	6,67 %	6,52 %	6,62 %	6,66 %
Relativna neto sedanja vrednost	0,38	0,38	0,36	0,38	0,38
Količnik relativne kosristnosti	1,05	1,05	1,05	1,05	1,05
Doba vračanja investicijskih sredstev	23 let	23 let	23 let	23 let	23 let

Table 1: Financial indicators by lots taken from financial analyses for Rihemberk Castle, including PPP. Calculations were made for parts of Rihemberk Castle (I Entrance buildings, II Northern palatium, III Castle tower, IV Southern palatium, V Exteriors), showing the necessary income to cover investments costs, operating costs and generate approximately 6.5% profit for a potential private investor in a chosen time period. Calculations were part of legal and financial analyses for Rihemberk Castle, prepared as part of RESTAURA project activities.

Faced with concrete figures calculated for Rihemberk Castle restoration and long-term revitalization, it was even more evident that in the current situation it would be difficult even for a private investor to financially cover all the costs. This information confirmed once again that the decision to restore and revitalise the Rihemberk Castle step by step, opening it to the public before a complete restoration, was correct.

It also confirmed that it makes sense to keep on investing public money to protect cultural monuments' structures against further deterioration, even if the funds available are not substantial. The case also confirmed the need to keep the built heritage in use and alive whenever possible, even if only simple methods, small-scale arrangements and minor improvements that can be financed from regular, annual public budgets, are possible.

The financial analyses confirmed the appropriateness of keeping on searching for additional, more substantial public funds, for example from EU or similar tenders, which was done also in the Rihemberk Castle case. Any investment can improve

³⁰ Inštitut za javno-zasebno partnerstvo (2018). Grad Rihemberk – pravne in finančne analize za izvedbo JZP / Rihemberk castle – PPP legal and financial analyses, RESTAURA project (CE339) DELIVERY T3.3.2. LJUBLJANA: INŠTITUT ZA JAVNO-ZASEBNO PARTNERSTVO.

the general state of a built heritage site and protect its values. At the same time, any improvement makes a positive impact on financial calculations, therefore making a heritage site more interesting for potential private investors as well.

To additionally motivate potential private partners to think about Rihemberk as a possible investment project and to motivate the general public and public decision-makers to continue the efforts in Rihemberk restoration and revitalization, two ICT presentation videos were prepared and published on the internet, with the response of the public much above expectations. The general presentation video reached more than 10,000 views in the first two weeks after publishing.³¹

RESTAURA project was concluded in May 2019. In approximately two years of activities it did not bring a private investor who would carry on the difficult task of Rihemberk Castle's complete restoration and long-term revitalization; however, the results achieved were more than satisfying. In two and a half years since the project started, the Rihemberk Castle was repaired to the point that it can except visitors, it has a clear and widely accepted long-term development vision and all basic conservation, technical, and financial documents ready to be used for further actions. It has already received some extra money for further improvements of the existing structures and programmes for visitors.

Becoming interesting and attractive enough, in 2019 the castle also got a small private operator, who is able to develop better programmes for castle heritage interpretation and for castle's appropriate use, while generating income from the satisfied visitors.

Figs. 13, 14: Rihemberk Castle's programs for visitors in 2019 are operated by Svitar, a private cultural institution, specialized in castles' revitalization and heritage interpretation. The program includes simple workshops for children, partly financed from EU sources (Photo: M. Pelikan).



³¹ RESTAURA ICT presentation videos Rihemberk castle (app. 10') and Rihemberk castle for potential investors (app. 4'), English versions are available online at <https://www.facebook.com/rihemberk/videos/427991188057967/> and <https://www.facebook.com/rihemberk/videos/482777362533626/>.

8 Conclusions

Slovenia, and Central Europe in general, has many publicly-owned built heritage sites that need restoration, revitalization, regular maintenance, and smarter use. To cover these needs, public owners and managers have to acquire a clear vision of what they and other people involved (the public) want, need and can do with the money available for the physical restoration and operation (revitalization) of the sites in question. Considering the current situation, it can be concluded that public money and staff, at national or EU levels, will never be sufficient and quick enough to save most built heritage from irreversible deterioration.

There are various ways of private capital involvement in heritage restoration and revitalization. Built heritage can be simply sold to private owners – an unpopular measure, especially in case of most important cultural monuments, as it deprives the public of the opportunity to influence the use and the future of their own cultural heritage. The other option is renting publicly-owned heritage buildings, which is many times problematic due to the relatively high rental rates, limited revenue generation opportunities, high operational costs, poor physical conditions of the buildings and formal restrictions regarding investing private money in raising the public-property value.

Taking everything into consideration, PPP is proving to be a good alternative from several perspectives: it requires relatively intensive public sector work in the preparatory phase, in order to determine the public interest framework and the detailed conditions that a private partner must include in its plans regarding built heritage restoration and revitalization. At the same time, under adequate circumstances, it allows investments of private money and revenue generation in preserving public cultural heritage sites, by financing the restoration works, maintenance costs, and even operational costs in a chosen period – in a way a specialised and interested private entity is capable of meeting the requirements with its own financial resources, knowledge and personnel. After a determined period, a restored built heritage is fully available to the public owner again in any case.