

Saxony-Anhalt region: MOMAr stakeholders back on track after Corona break

- The regional stakeholder group members met in Magdeburg for the second time and for the first time after the Corona break.
- External expert shared knowledge about the Magdeburg region's application for the "European Capital of Culture 2025".

Magdeburg, 15 of July 2020 – On the second MOMAr stakeholder meeting, 12 participants met at the Ministry of Regional Development and Transport Saxony-Anhalt (Germany).

The stakeholder group members presented their current activities. A specific focus was on how the Corona restrictions affected and still affect their everyday work.

Partner institutions reported that there are of course still no coaches with day tourists, but an increasing number of individual and bicycle tourists visiting the region's heritage in museums, monasteries, gardens, and exhibitions. Online and social media content is becoming more important than ever.

During the summer holiday season in Saxony-Anhalt, partner institutions offer a broad range of outdoor events (e.g. jazz festival, picnics) under special distance and hygienic precautions. Although many events (concerts) had to be cancelled or postponed, new and modified event formats are very well received.

Due to worldwide travel restrictions, Saxony-Anhalt decided to shift a major part of the heritage marketing budget to attract domestic and European neighboring countries' tourists instead of addressing visitors from far away abroad.

It is still not clear whether important branch events such as the international tourism fair, which was cancelled in 2020, will take place next year.

However, Saxony-Anhalt's heritage representatives jointly bring forward the updating of the "Tourism Masterplan" that provides a common roadmap for the next years.

Some of the regional MOMAr stakeholders give insights in other European projects they are involved in covering MOMAr-related topics:

- FINCH (Interreg Europe) – focusses on financing the investments in heritage;
- IMPACTOUR (Horizon 2020) - aims at increasing the availability of both quantitative and qualitative data on cultural heritage tourism;
- Recapture the fortress cities RFC (Interreg Europe) – is about handling fortifications.

Participants agreed on a more detailed exchange of experience where appropriate.

Furthermore, MOMAr stakeholders talked about Magdeburg region being on the shortlist for the title of "European Capital of Culture 2025" together with the applicant cities of Hanover, Hildesheim, Chemnitz and Nuremberg. On 28 October, a press conference will announce the decision as to which city will be "European Capital of Culture 2025".

In the ongoing application process, the focus is not only on the City of Magdeburg, but also on the surrounding rural districts *Börde*, *Jerichower Land* and *Salzlandkreis* coining the region. This reflects on the MOMAr approach of how both responsible persons and citizens can feel part of a common home and cultural landscape.



Therefore, the regional MOMAr partners were happy to welcome Uta Belkuis, the coordinator of the initiative “Magdeburg - A common (CULTURAL) REGION?”. This initiative is a kind of organizational support structure for “European Capital of Culture 2025” application, in particular when it comes to stakeholder involvement within urban-rural cooperation.

Should Magdeburg not become the “European Capital of Culture 2025”, the regional process will nevertheless continue since numerous challenges are best met jointly, e.g. heritage and tourism, regional development, the establishment of companies, finding and retaining skilled workers, and creating an overall positive regional identity.

For more information contact:

Fiene Grieger, MOMAr project coordinator
Ministry for Regional Development and Transport Saxony-Anhalt
fiene.grieger@mlv.sachsen-anhalt.de
+493915673575

About MOMAr

Models of Management for Singular Rural Heritage (MOMAr) is an Interreg Europe programme funded by European Union. MOMAr means providing strategic thinking to the use of cultural and natural resources. The project highlights the existence of territories with problems - depopulation, ageing, no use of resources- whose identity is however marked by a rich heritage, exceptional in some cases - UNESCO heritage - and whose management entities have either not finished defining their models of action in terms of cultural and natural resources or directly borrowed models that do not correspond to the territorial reality.

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