

## Digitalization and education, the core of the III MOMAr Interregional meeting

- The event, hosted by the Territorial Administrative Unit of Mehedinti County, joined 70 experts in heritage management from nine European countries.

**24-25<sup>th</sup> March 2021-** The pedagogical purpose and the use of new technologies in the field of heritage management centred the third interregional meeting of the European project MOMAr (**Models of Management for Singular Rural Heritage**) of Interreg Europe. On March 24 and 25, the event brought together more than 70 experts from nine European countries in order to share cases of success and failure in the management of heritage in rural areas. The online event was presented under the title: **“From theory to practice. Experimental Models of Management Tested”**.

The meeting was attended by the partners of MOMAr, **Provincial Government of Zaragoza** (Spain) as project leader, **the Ministry of Regional Development and Transport of Saxony-Anhalt** (Germany), the **Regional Development Agency of South Bohemian** (Czech Republic), **Corsican Region** (France), the **Province of Groningen** (Netherlands), and the **Territorial Administrative Unit of Mehedinti County** (Romania) as the host of the event. The COVID pandemic obliged to change the original plan of this Interregional Meeting which was supposed to take place in Mehedinti County combining a scientific programme with a study visit. However, MOMAr partners committed to complete the fieldwork once the mobility in Europe will be safe again.

### Digital and educational heritage

Silvia Iuliana Tranca, executive director at project management, sustainable, development and tourism department from Mehedinti County Council, together with Maria del Carmen Gracia, Chief of Culture Service at Provincial Government of Zaragoza welcomed the first session. As a host of the event, Tranca praised for the work of MOMAr and its tangible effects on the territories involved, proof of that, she announced that Mehedinti County Council is already working to implement one of the good practices learned from the first MOMAr's Interregional event hold in Corsica last March 2020, it is a model of a conservation centre in a rural area.

Following, stakeholders took the floor and presented numerous cases of study, good and challenging practices in heritage management, focusing on digitalization and educational initiatives to transform heritage sites and recover them for the local people and external visitors. This is the case of **Michaelstein Monastery in Saxony-Anhalt** where it is possible to visit the enclosure and the exhibition rooms in a 3D virtual tour. In the same area, the Environment, Nature and Climate Protection Foundation of Saxony-Anhalt (SUNK) came up with an idea to increase the visibility of **Blankenburg forest** broadcasting digital spring walks live on Instagram during the coronavirus lockdown. The ongoing project in the **Iron Gates Natural Park in Mehedinti County**, a cross-border touristic project between Bulgaria and Romania, is also working to create 4 trails where all the cultural and natural heritage will be digitalized having, as a result, a virtual video walk presented on a web platform. In the field of educational projects, South Bohemia presented two good practices. The first one was the **wolf enclosure located in the small village of Srní**. There, they created a space to reintroduce the wolf, native from the area but extinct in the XIX century, where families, hikers, nature lovers can enjoy the natural heritage while learning from this unique animal. The case of the **Soběslav municipal library** is an example of the rehabilitation of a historic building, a castle, into a public and social facility, open to the local population but an attraction for visitors as well. Province of Groningen, at its turn, presented the **Keykeepers project from Groningen Historic Churches Foundation**, where they achieved to bring new uses to medieval churches with the implication of schools and students. Besides, the

restoration of the landscape through a project of reconstruction of the **Hassensboch fortress** from the 14<sup>th</sup> century by the **Foundation of Landscape Management**. As they said, "it is not just an archaeological work but a touristic promotional initiative". Finally, the **council of Monegrillo in Zaragoza Province** explained their initiative to restore an old anti-raid shelter from the Spanish Civil War called "Cueva del Castillo", to create a visiting space as well as a recovering memory project and a platform to disseminate a pacifist message.

The session concluded with the presentation of various challenging experiences from which the experts reflected and concluded about new necessary approaches. This is the case of an **old sugar factory in Zaragoza**, abandoned by the company, the people, and the administration, but from which it can be learned the necessity for public-private cooperation. **Transromanica, Saxony-Anhalt stakeholder**, presented a social media action that did not achieve the expected results but from it, the organization learned how to create a more effective and successful digital campaign. Finally, **Province of Groningen** explained their ambitious web project where people can access a detailed map and library of the cultural heritage in the region. As Janneke Verdijk, MOMAr's project manager in Groningen declared, "our ambitions are very high, but we trust our tool".

### Heritage for people

The second day of exchange allowed to delve into the use of cultural and natural spaces for the benefit and direct enjoyment of the population. In this sense, **Iron Gates Region Museum** in Rumania showed its last works of restoration of an archaeological park based on a roman ancient ruin, and they parallel research to keep the memory of thousands of **memorial monuments in honour to the First World War soldiers**, spread across the country and real pieces of art in a process of abandon. **Mehedinti Plateau Geopark**, from its side, converted a cave of special geological, ecological, and historical interest into a concert stage. **Regional Development Agency of South Bohemia** explained a trans-border cooperation project, **Památky žijí**, created to bring people to historical heritage sites such as castles or monasteries, but in a modern format of events, music performances, workshops, fairs... Similarly, the multi country-based **Reformation cultural route** is getting more and more visitors to sites related to the religious reformation movement across Europe that happened from the 12<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> century. Travelling to Spain, **Daroca International Early Music Festival & Course** was presented as a good practice where culture is giving life to the historic and architectonic local heritage. **The roman city of Los Bañales of Uncastillo** was also an example of how to offer alive ancient ruins sites to the visitors. In addition, stakeholders from Province of Groningen contributed with two more projects, an **ecovillage** with the plan to build a sustainable community at the same time they work for the conservation of industrial and natural heritage, and the project **School Kerk** designed to use churches for educational purposes, not necessarily religious-related but with a will to create a dialog between children and a better understanding of multicultural communal living.

As a closure, **Isabel Soria, scientific coordinator of MOMAr**, concluded about the need to "put digitization at the service of educational and pedagogical projects", since she assured: "when we get to know our natural and cultural heritage closely is when we give it more value, we have to make an effort to explain it and make people feel united to it".

### European cooperation

Interreg Europe aims to exchange knowledge between European territories with the last goal of having a positive impact on the national and regional policies instruments. With this desire to cooperate, MOMAr had the participation of three other European projects with common features to its lines of action: **Interreg CRinMA, Interreg RegionArts, and the platform Cultural and Creative Regional Ecosystems (CCRE-S3)**.

## **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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