



The European Federation of Fortified Sites

HERITAGE CALL for ACTION

‘EFFORTS GOES GREEN’

Statement at the 7th 2022 EFFORTS CONGRESS

Kaunas, Lithuania

7 October 2022

INTRODUCTION

Fortified heritage or built military heritage are forts, fortifications, fortified churches, walled cities, defence lines from Roman times to the Cold War. They uniquely exist in large numbers in every European country. Fortified sites, being precious testimony to the collective memory, represent an expression of Europe’s cultural heritage. They demonstrate the intrinsic need to defend borders in the past, however, today this shared history contains symbols of our common European history, now uniting Europe instead of dividing it. Fortified heritage, as a foundation for change, holds a significant potential for the definition of **functions that tackle modern-day societal, technological and environmental challenges**:

- reaching environmental targets, through:
 - innovation in climate mitigation by redevelopments and restorations taking into account zero-emission and renewable energy approaches;
 - ‘green and blue’ centers (nature/ parks and water lines) and better and inclusive spatial and landscape planning;
 - being sites of unique biodiversity and bio-ecosystems;
 - contributing to the promotion of innovative technologies & new forms of entrepreneurship (incl. Human-centred approaches).
- increasing cultural access and participation and intrinsic cultural/artistic heritage values of fortified heritage (incl. shared European and international heritage), storytelling (from space to place, volunteering, local traditions, wellbeing, all relating to the New European Bauhaus Initiative);

- enticing societal engagement, inclusion and diversity (incl. broader outreach), incl. heritage as a 'a societal glue', connecting within local communities (broader than only EU);

"We, members and interested stakeholders of fortified heritage in Europe, believe that (...) fortified heritage offers an opportunity to make a positive contribution to several EU priorities and United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. The following six propositions highlight the potential of this specific type of heritage in Europe and European programmes. They demonstrate how to preserve European military architecture through active involvement of all stakeholders. The importance of fortification heritage places it next to religious and industrial buildings, historic houses and all other built and architectural European heritage. Realising that the conceptual attitudes towards cultural heritage at European level are undergoing a fundamental transformation, from an approach focused on conservation to a focus on value and utilization of heritage as an asset" (EFFORTS 2018 Declaration of Venice).

On the basis of the 2018 EFFORTS Venice Declaration, the 2019 Call to Action in Antwerp, and emanating from the result of its 2021 Congress 'FORTIFIED HERITAGE in **GREEN** and **BLUE** – A EUROPEAN SUSTAINABLE SOLUTION', and the **2022 Congress ('Communities working towards stable fortified heritage')** a state of play of its actions and a vision for action until **2025 based on the EFFORTS Goes Green project**, EFFORTS presents its *Heritage Call for Action*.

EFFORTS, in its sixth working year, underlines the ADDED VALUE of fortified heritage for the European Green Deal, using fortified heritage sites' unique qualifications and characteristics, as presented by EFFORTS members and speakers at the 2021 and 2022 EFFORTS congresses for: (with examples)

- green spaces and biodiversity, nature reserves, climate change mitigation (urban heat reduction) in green buffers ('s-Hertogenbosch and Zuiderwaterlinie, Netherlands)
- local circular economy policies and smart energy solutions (Šibenik Fortress of Culture, Croatia)
- cross-cutting cultural and environmental slow tourism (Regionale Landschappen, Belgium)
- European cultural / green routes with their economic importance and intangible values representations (Forte Cultura, Forts/Unchained, Via Hispania, Adrifort)
- resilience, societal wellbeing and empowering local communities (Kaunas Fortress Park, Lithuania)
- urban planning and mobility solutions (Culemborg, Netherlands)
- good governance for multi-stakeholder cooperation (EU Interreg Europe 'Recapture the Fortress Cities')

'EFFORTS GOES GREEN'

The 'EFFORTS Goes Green' (EGG) 2022 – 2025 project aims at improving and intensifying the cooperation between its members in all European countries, in particular between the local and regional cultural authorities, owners and users of fortified heritage, and all other cultural

actors and professionals working with **environmental action driven fortified European heritage**.

The EGG project **builds capacities**, enhances cross-sector and cross-border cooperation and the exchange of experience on how to get the best out of this specific type of heritage and its social, cultural, economic, and environmental impact on the territory.

Therefore **‘learning by sharing’** is the motto of the future collaborative digital platform FORTMEET to be set up, promoting active exchange and cooperation between the network members. In this platform project, fortified heritage’s shared environmental and societal solutions become the framework for future European cooperation. It will be based on the Joint Scientific and Expert Committee’s database.

Essential are also the **EFFORTS workshops on climate change actions / energy efficiency, green tourism, social integration and inclusiveness**, feeding into the ongoing **EFFORTS Fortified Heritage Impact Study** led by the University of Venice.

Through the annual European-wide public event on its sites (**European Fortress Summer**), the possibilities and achievements of integrating fortified heritage into climate change action and the improvement of fortified sites' inclusiveness and accessibility for all, will be highlighted.

Finally, by means of the **future Charter on Green and Inclusive Fortification Sites**, the EGG project will promote EFFORTS members’ potential to work towards a sustainable, culturally inclusive and safe Europe, demonstrating the solutions fortified heritage has to offer for the social, cultural and environmental challenges we face.

HERITAGE CALL FOR ACTION

EFFORTS therefore calls its members to work together, in the framework of the EFFORTS Goes Green project 2022-2025, on cooperation in the following **ACTIONS**:

1. Enforce a **multilateral European cooperation framework** for common projects, based on the exchange of knowledge (in the EFFORTS **Fortification Heritage Knowledge Center** in Forte Marghera (IT), with the EFFORTS Forte Cultura **Joint Scientific and Expert Committee**)
2. Engage in **capacity building for public and private stakeholders** and achieving the European Green Deal goals through adoption of climate change adaptation and socially inclusive action, making fortified heritage the catalyst for green urban development and cohesion and the driver of European social values.
3. Establish fortified heritage as a complementary key tool for the implementation of the **New European Bauhaus Initiative**.
4. Foster cross-cutting holistic green knowledge on **management and rehabilitation of fortified sites** using:
 - climate change actions;
 - state of the art energy solutions;
 - green responsible tourism;
 - social integration and inclusiveness and cultural diversity;

-empowering local communities on the basis of the Council of Europe Faro Convention on the value of cultural heritage for society.

5. Use fortified sites as **green buffers for post-pandemic community wellbeing** locations and **creative placemaking (European Fortress Summer)**.

The elements that have been highlighted during the EFFORTS 2021 and 2022 Congresses ‘**FORTIFIED HERITAGE in GREEN and BLUE – A EUROPEAN SUSTAINABLE SOLUTION**’ and ‘**Communities working towards sustainable fortified heritage**’ are a comprehensive evaluation and awareness of the cross-sectoral features related to the fortified heritage, which are fully endorsed by the EFFORTS membership.

The multi-faceted socio-economic, cultural and environmental features of fortified heritage and the implementation of the most effective best practices related to each specific above-mentioned components, represent a tangible tool and a significant contribution to the achievement of the European Green Deal as well as to the United Nations Millennium Development Goals and European values of peace and democracy.

Kaunas, 7 October 2022

Continuing from the Brussels Statement of January 2022 and working towards the 2023 Congress in Maastsrict.



