



**Efforts Annual Congress 2026**  
*Fortified heritage and the private sector*  
**Monday 8 June - Wednesday 10 June 2026**  
**Citadel, Kolonel Blondeellaan, Diest (BE)**

**Present** and future resilient  
project cooperation in the  
Baltic Sea region

**Egidijus Bagdonas, director of  
Kaunas Fortress Park, Lithuania**



**Interreg**



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**Lithuania – Poland**

# **FORT - UNION - Polish-Lithuanian integration of the fortification network for the development of flagship tourist products**

**Interreg VI-A Lithuania-Poland Programme 2021-2027 under the Programme priority 2 – Promoting physical, emotional and cultural wellbeing Specific objective, 2.2 – Enhancing the role of culture and sustainable tourism in economic development, social inclusion and social innovation.**

**in cooperation with**



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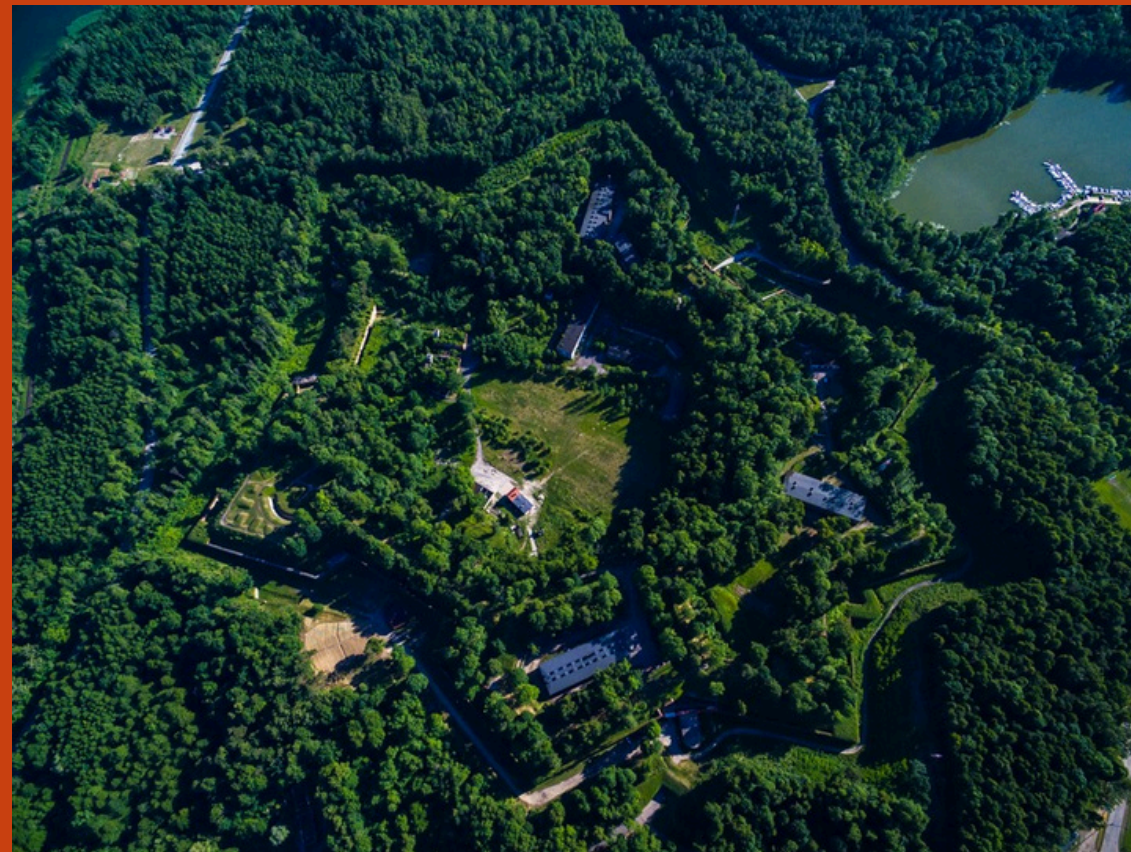
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## Lithuania – Poland



### BOYEN TVIRTOVĖ (Giżycko)

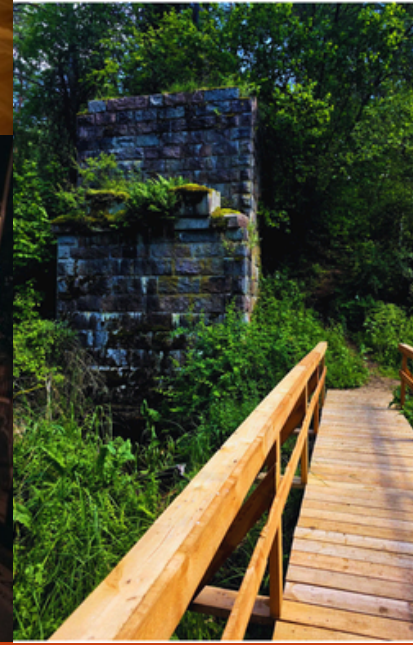
### Lėcius (Giżycko)



### Balstogės (Białystok) karo muziejus



### Varėna (Orany)



### KAUNO TVIRTOVĖ



### Kaunas (Kowno)





**through cross-border cooperation we  
are making communities more resilient**

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to create a network of  
cooperation and a common  
brand „FORT – UNION”

**WWI HERITAGE TOURISM  
CLUSTER**



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**The aim of the project:  
to create a network of cooperation and  
a common brand „FORT – UNION” in  
the border area of Lithuania and  
Poland within the framework of the  
development of sustainable tourism  
products of Giżycko, Kaunas,  
Białystok, Varena and Osowiec  
Fortress with the use of World War I  
fortification objects and related  
historical, natural and cultural  
heritage, in order to promote and  
popularize the area, improving the  
well-being of the border community.**



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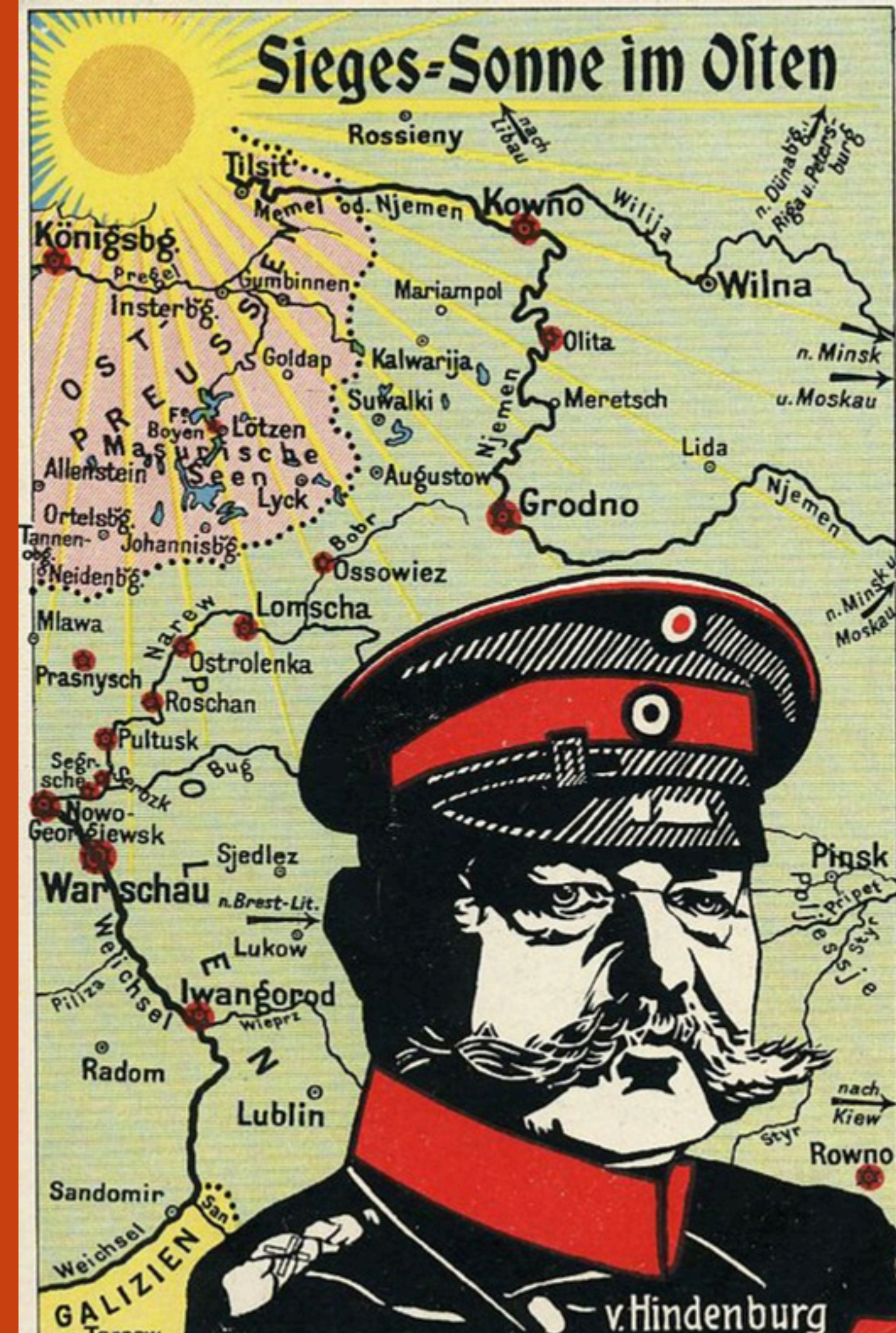


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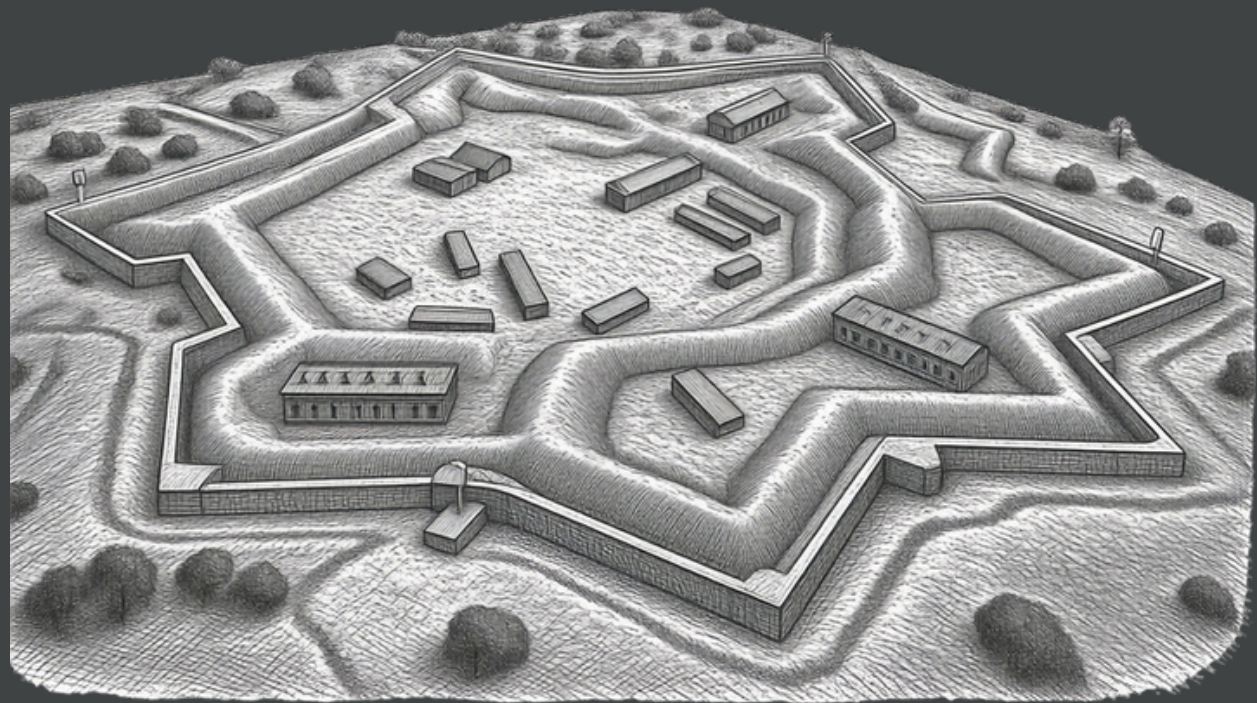
## Challenge:

Building the visibility of cultural heritage potential and increasing tourism offers in the Programme area common Lithuanian and Polish cultural heritage in the field of World War I fortress objects requires a coherent presentation to local and foreign visitors, including on the basis of cooperation, branding and preservation of historical objects, including with the use of new technologies (which are still little used).

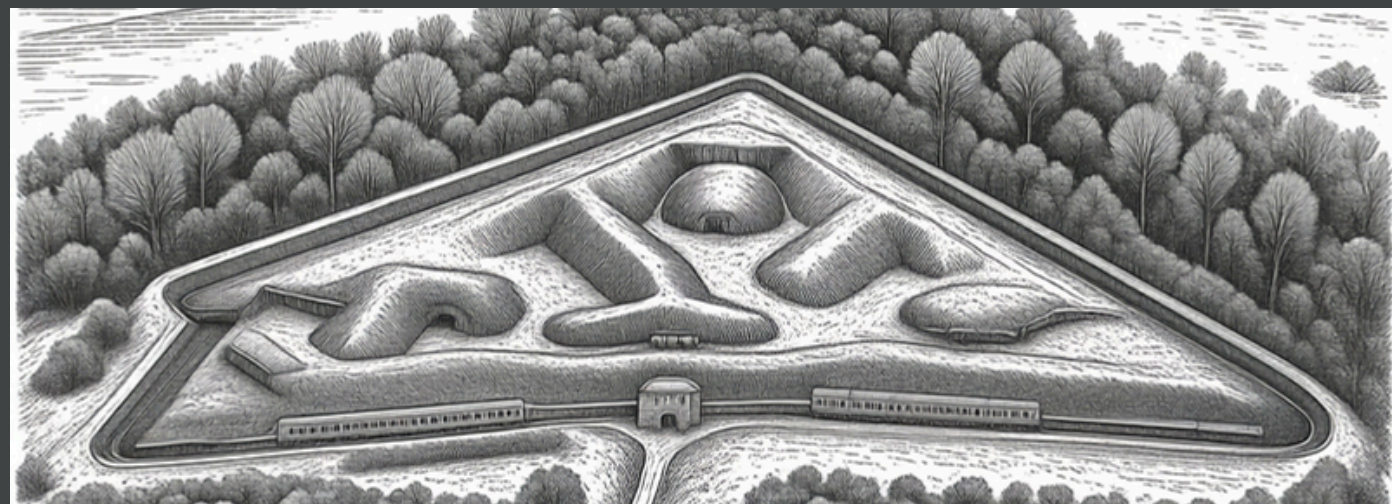


# FORT - UNION

WWI FORTIFIED HERITAGE



IN SPIRIT OF POLISH-LITHUANIAN  
COMMONWEALTH



1569-1795

# WWI drastically reshaped the borders in Europe





Norway

Sweden

Finland

Estonia

Latvia

Lithuania

East Prussia

Poland

German Empire

Denmark

Netherlands

Belgium

After collapse of Russian empire, states declared independency

Russi

BUSINESS INSIDER



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**LP1 Gizycko**  
**PP5 Boyen Fortress**

**PP4 Museum Białystok**

**PP2 Kaunas**  
**PP3 Kaunas Fortress**

**PP6 Varena**

**FORT-UNION NETWORK  
AND CROSS-BORDER  
ROUTE**



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**LP1 Gizycko**

**PP2 Kaunas**

**PP3 Kaunas Fortress**

**PP4 Museum Białystok**

**PP5 Boyen Fortress**

**PP6 Varena**

## PROGRAMM AREA:





KALNANAS



Kauno tvirtovės parkas



# Kaunas Fortress Park - more than 20 different sites and 200 ha in Kaunas city and district



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**Fort no. 4**



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**WP 1 specific objective is to exchange the knowledge and experience of project partners including communities and stakeholders and inform them about the benefits of the project, for the creation of a marketing strategy for the fortress facilities of the Boyen Fortress and Kaunas for the „Fort-Union” brand, binding an agreement between Giżycko and Kaunas and Varena, Kaunas Fortress Park, Boyen Fortress in Giżycko, Białystok Museum and Biebrza National Park to promote and popularize „Fort-Union” tourism offers affecting the development of the Program area.**

**2.2. RCO87: Organisations cooperating across borders**

**Output 1.1 Establishment of a cooperation network agreement „FORT-UNION” – 8 organisations**

**2.2. RCO116: Jointly developed solutions**

**Output 1.2 Development of a document for the Fort-Union strategy – 1 solution**





Study visit Biebrzanski National Park



Project team meeting in Gizycko

# cross-border cooperation



Study visit Białystok War Museum



Project team meeting in Kaunas



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Together we create FORT-UNION – a network connecting the past with the future in the spirit of Polish-Lithuanian cooperation.

**WP 2 specific objective is the preservation of fortress facilities in Kaunas and Gizycko, together with the protection of the historical, natural and cultural heritage of World War I Gizycko, Kaunas, Bialystok and Varėna, as well as cross-border cooperation and cultural integration for the promotion and creation of sustainable tourism products contributing to the attractiveness of tourism and social life in the Lithuanian and Polish areas.**

**2.2.RC077: Number of cultural and tourism sites supported**

**Output 2.1 Barracks No. 1 in the Boyen Fortress – 1 cultural and tourism sites**

**Output 2.2 Fort No. 4 in Kaunas Fortress Park – 1 cultural and tourism sites**

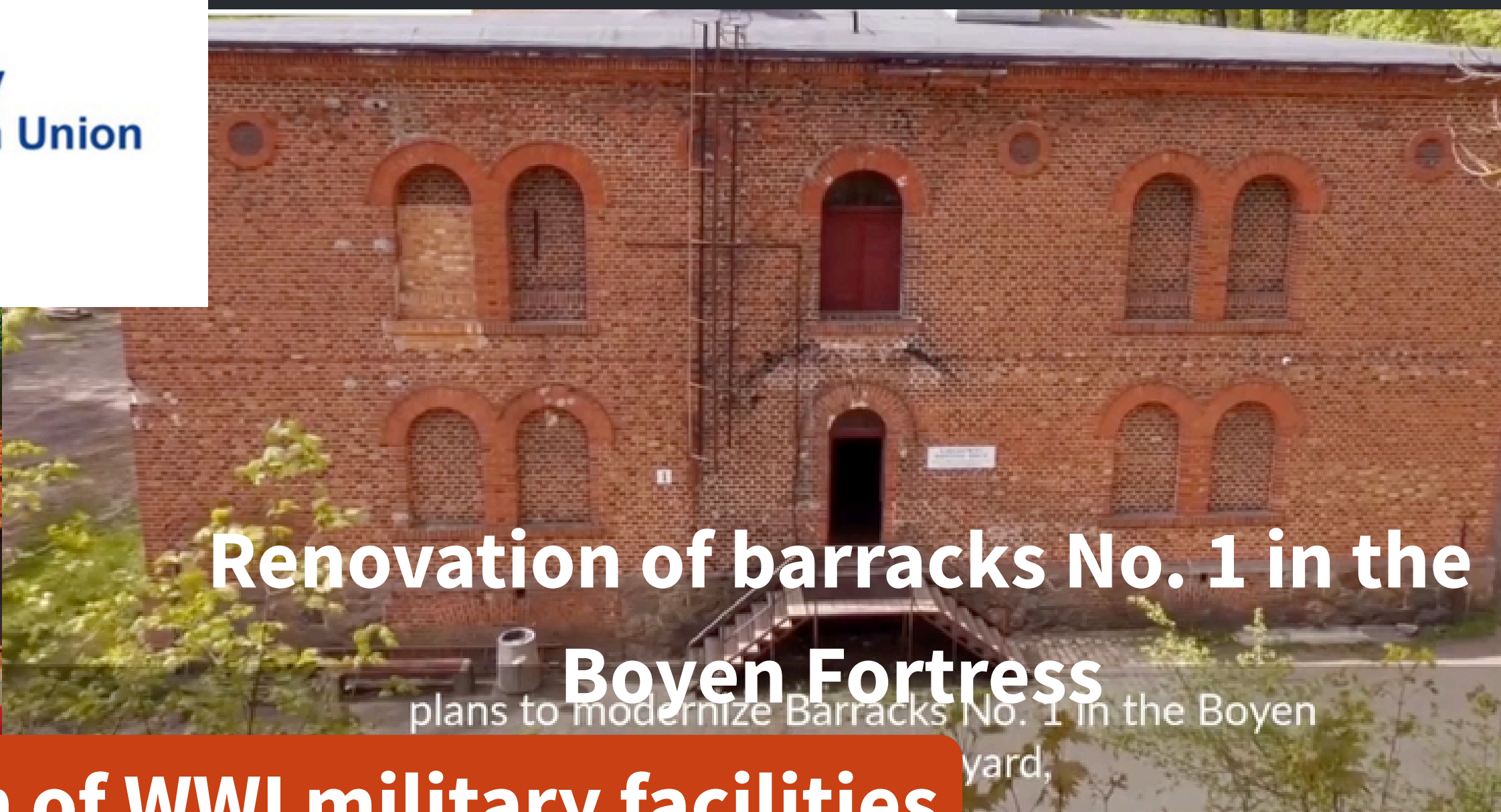
**Output 2.3 Exhibition at the new headquarters of the Army Museum in Bialystok 1 cultural and tourism sites**

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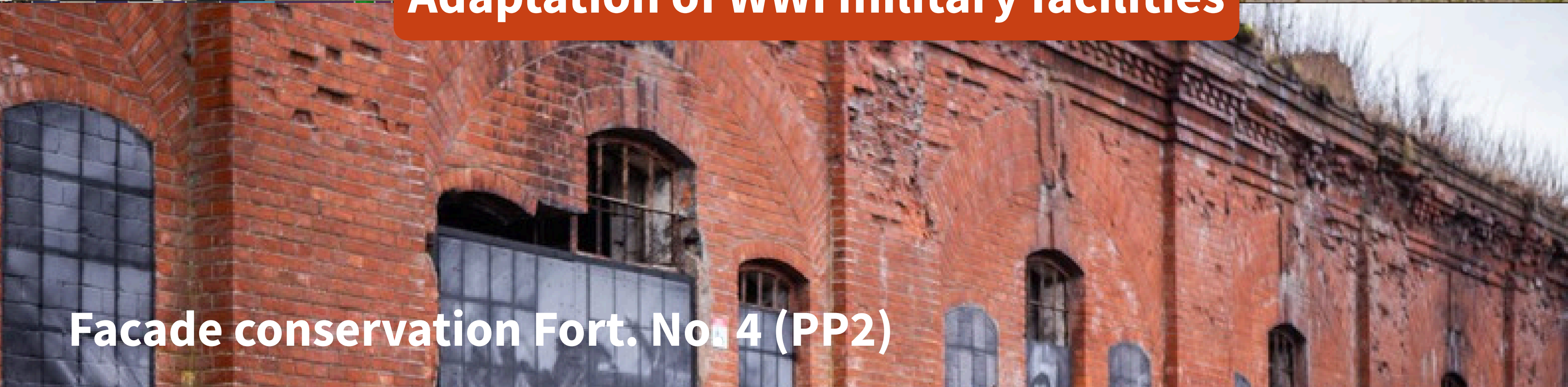
**Lithuania – Poland**



# Renovation of barracks No. 1 in the Boyen Fortress

plans to modernize Barracks No. 1 in the Boyen  
yard,

**Adaptation of WWI military facilities**



**Facade conservation Fort. No. 4 (PP2)**



# work in progress



## Kaunas



## Białystok



## Gizycko



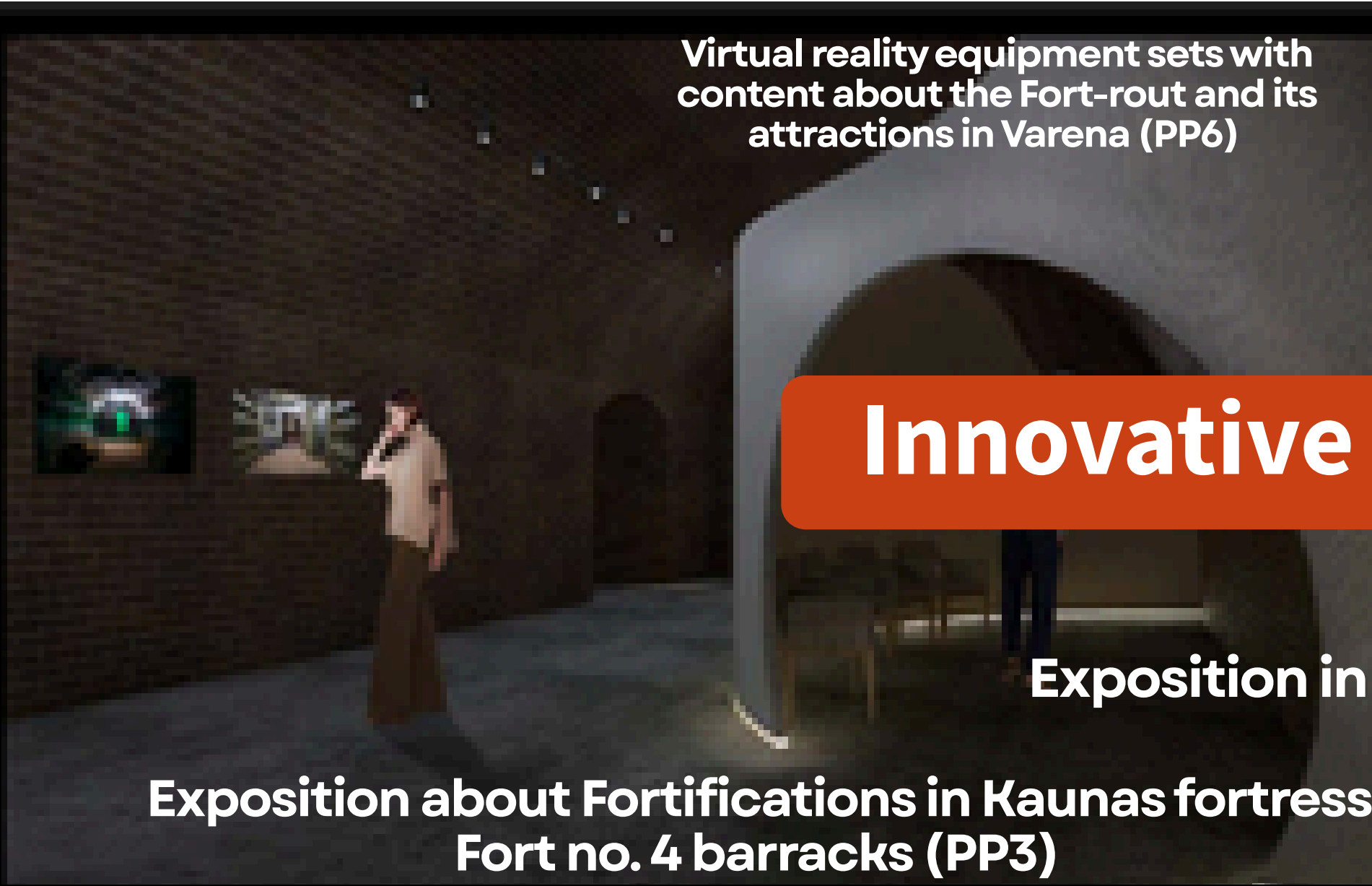
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Virtual reality equipment sets with  
content about the Fort-rout and its  
attractions in Varena (PP6)



Exposition about Fortifications in Kaunas fortress  
Fort no. 4 barracks (PP3)



The equipped visitor rooms at the PP4 Museum Bialystok

**Innovative exhibitions**



Exposition in Boyen fortress



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## **Activity 2.2 Tourism products for smart and sustainable solutions of fortress sites**

- **Multimedia mock- up of 3D model of Boyen Fortress - service (LP1)**
- **FORT-UNION The website. Its content will be available in English**
- **Services for the implementation of the multimedia exhibition of Barracks No. 1 (LP1)**
- **Augmented reality tour in Kaunas D.2.2.4 fortrtress Fort no. 4 (PP3)**
- **World War I tourist route plan (PP4)**
- **Purchase of historical maps of the Fortress (PP5)**
- **A publication of the defensive fortifications infrastructure route (PP6)**

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**Virtual, augmented reality tours**



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## Augmented reality tour in Kaunas fortrtress Fort no. 4 (PP3)



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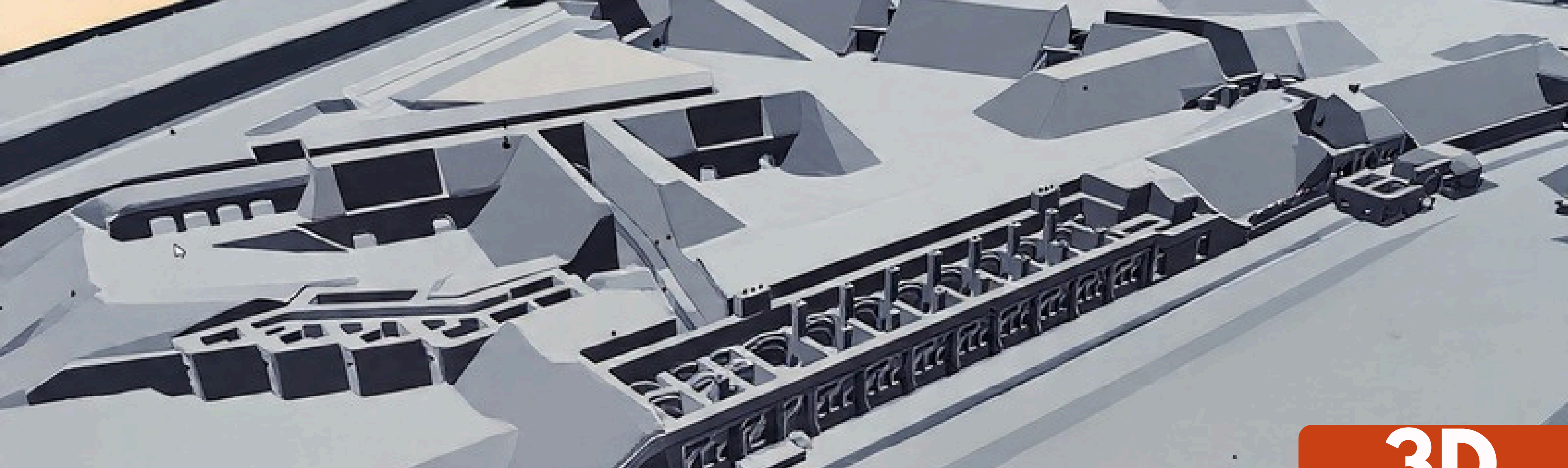
**Lithuania – Poland**



Together we create FORT-UNION – a network connecting the past with the future in the spirit of Polish-Lithuanian cooperation.

## **Activity 2.2 Tourism products for smart and sustainable solutions of fortress sites**

- **Photogrammetric research and digital D.2.2.8 content creation about the fort-rout attractions in Varena(PP6)**
- **Historical research about the fort-rout and it's objects in Varena (PP6)**



**3D**



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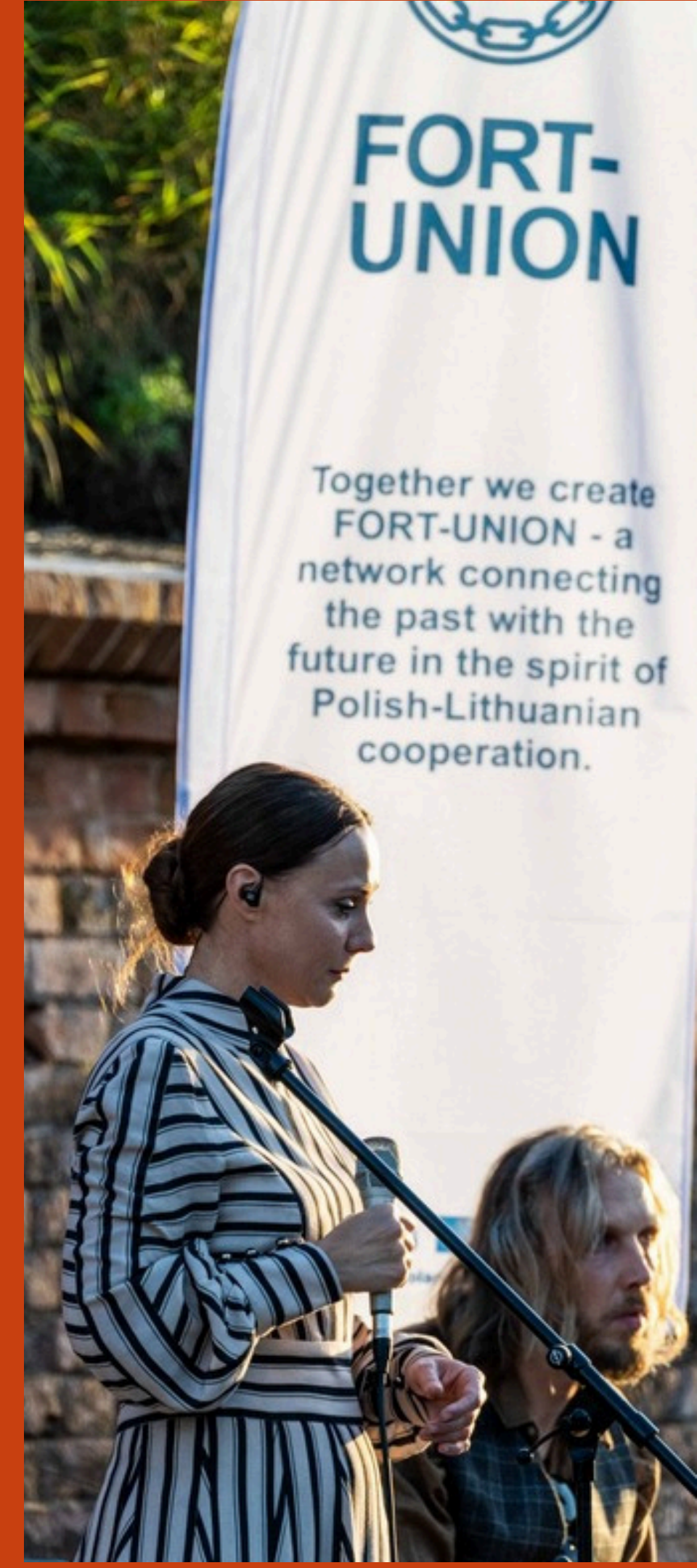


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## **Activity 2.3 Joint partnership events using military facilities**

- **Sustainable tourism participational- educational program "Heritage house"**
- **Garrison festival in Bialystok (PP4)**
- **FORT UNION 3D Festival, Boyen Fortress and Old crafts fair Fortress**
- **Intersectoral festival PP3 Fort- D.2.3.2 Union in Kaunas fortress and cross- border area 2025, 2026, 2027**
- **Open event for the fortification network presentation in Varena (PP6)**





# Joint events



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Together we create FORT-UNION – a network connecting the past with the future in the spirit of Polish-Lithuanian cooperation.

# Intersectoral festival PP3 Fort-Union in Kaunas fortress



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**Intersectoral festival PP3 Fort- D.2.3.2  
Union in Kaunas fortress and cross- border  
area 2025, 2026, 2027**

**Heritage fair - where environmental  
organisations / sustainable practises and  
educations will be organised**

**LAND-ART plennair (inspirations from WWI  
heritage - ex. living sculptu res, secondary  
use. Artsits will create sculptures from local  
natural materials - wood, bushes, grasss,  
steel and from other foundings in territory**



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Together we create FORT-UNION – a network connecting the past with the future in the spirit of Polish-Lithuanian cooperation.

## **Sustainable** tourism participational - educational program "Heritage house"

**Educational workshops:  
every two weeks after opening of exposition**

**Target group: local and international  
tourists, young people, students and  
families. Participants: 400 people**

**20 educational events**

**participational part**

**Clay and bricks (construction of fortress)**

**Modeling and engineering**

**Practical geology - structures of natural  
landscapes in Kaunas:**

**Creation of walking tour between fortress:  
connecting natural and fortified landscapes**

**Natural fortifications: education about plants  
and trees**

**Education about biodiversity and endangered  
species in Kaunas fortress - BATS**



landart



2015



2025



**2025 - light installation**

*ephemeros*



**2026 - full facade installation**





*ephemeros*

*architect Mantas Maziliauskas*





**Kaunas Fort no. 4**

**Boyen fortress**



**vegetation issues**



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**Landscaping equipment for  
D.2.1.6 Kaunas fortress Fort no.  
4 territory maintenance (PP3)**



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**Activity 1.1. Study visits**

**Activity 1.2. Developing a marketing strategy**

**Activity 1.3. "Fort-Union" branding support**

**Tourism - marketing workshops with EFFORTS in Kaunas  
(PP3) A two-day exchange knowledge**

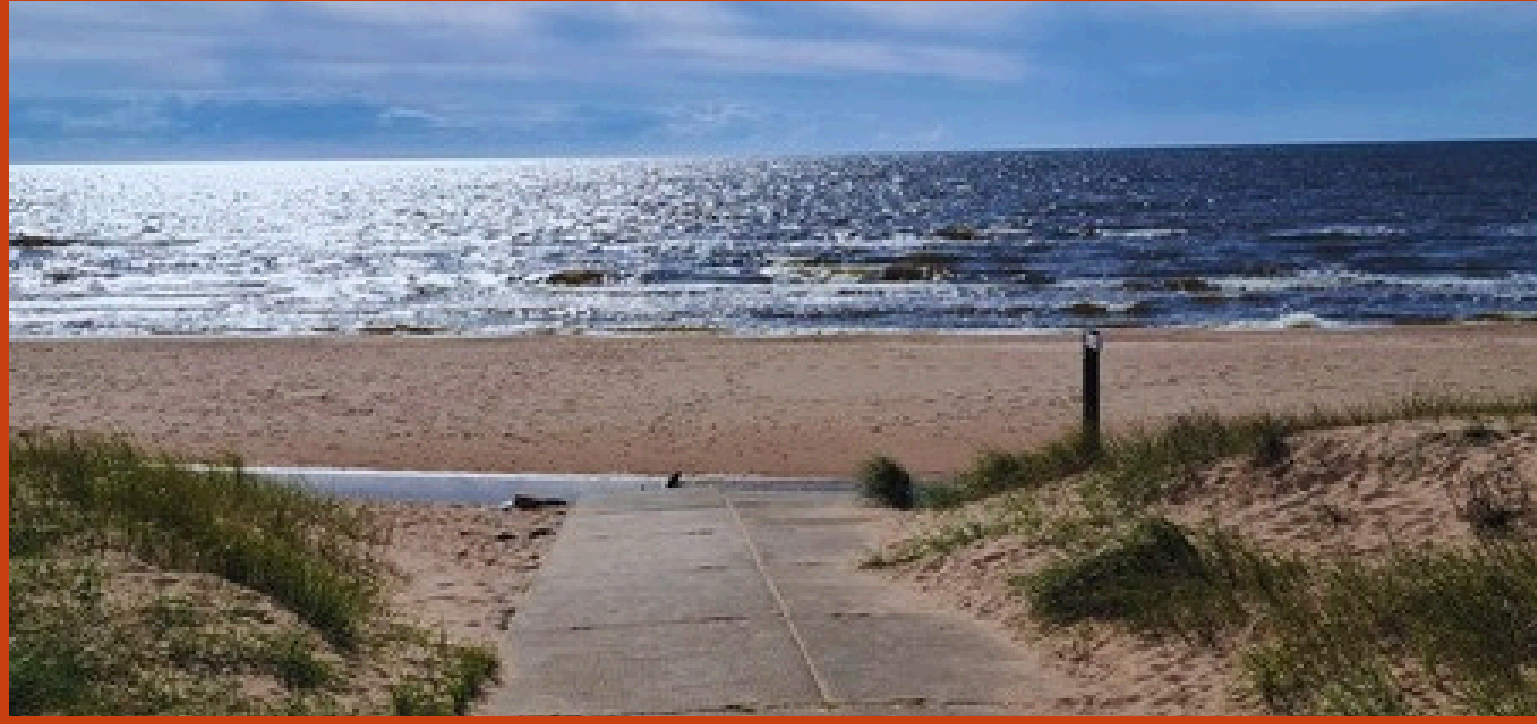
**Activity 1.4 Visibility activities of the partner network and  
brand "FORT-UNION"**





BALTIC  
ROUTE

inspired by traveling from Kaunas to  
Kuresaare in 2025 summer





BALTIC  
ROUTE

diverse fortifications with  
common history

Kaunas, LT



Daugavpils, LV



Kuresaare, EE



BALTIC STATES



**diverse fortifications with  
common history**

**Suomenlinna, FL**



**Hamina, Kotka fortifications FL**



**Garderhøjfortet, DK**



**Boyen fortress, PL**



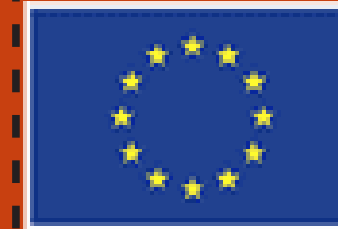
**Åland, Bomersund fortress FL**



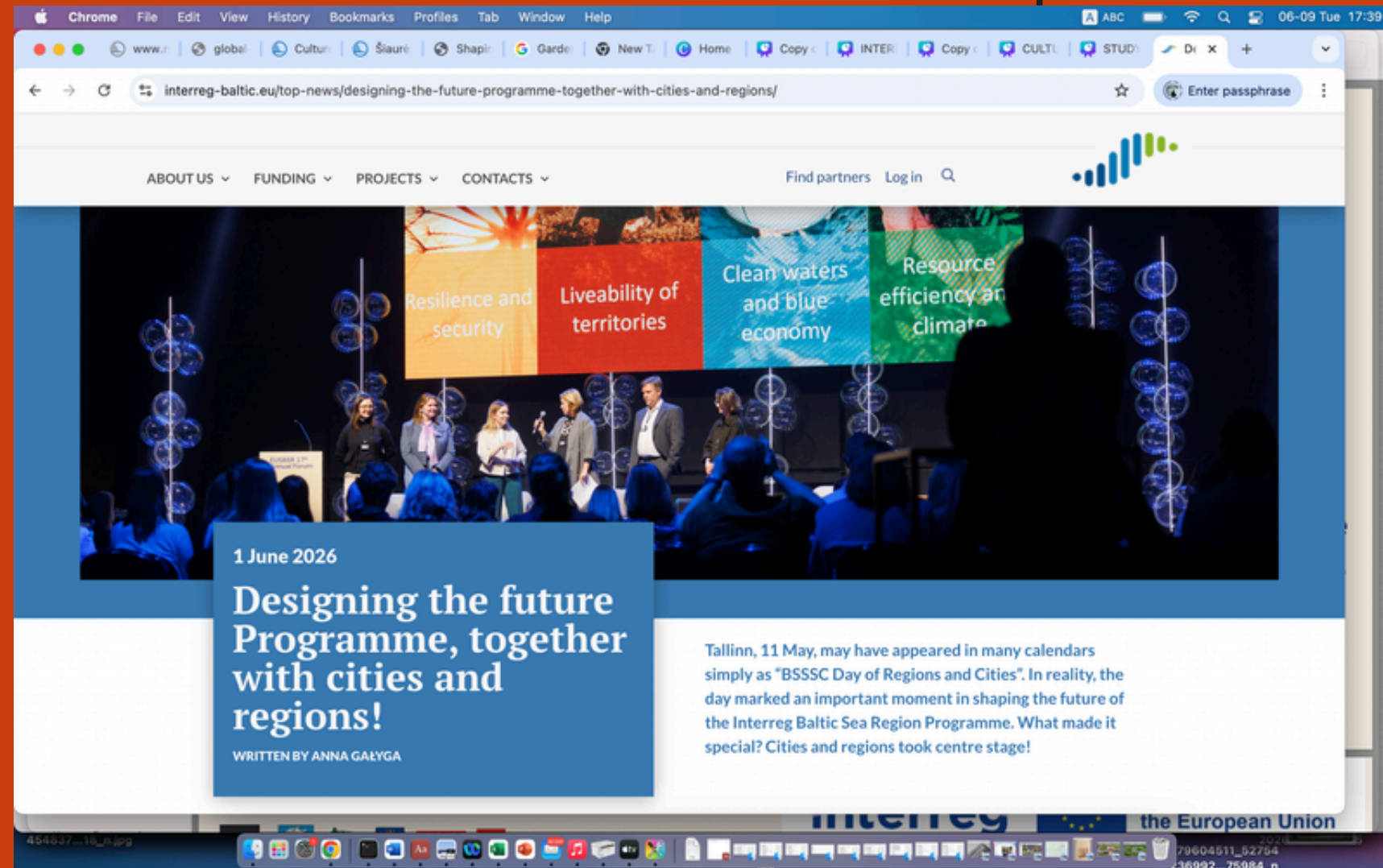


our destination to prepare proposal  
2028-2029

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Baltic Sea Region



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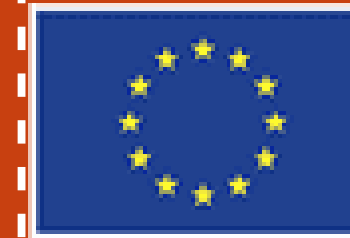


**Resilience and security**

**Liveability of territories**

**Clean waters and blue economy**

**Resource efficiency and climate**



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## Preperations:

# 1. Building regional network



**Nordic  
Culture Point**

open call

10.08. – 04.09.2026

Short-term network funding

Explore new solutions and create networks for co-operation between artists and cultural practitioners in the Nordic and Baltic region.

The network must consist of partners from:

at least three Nordic and/or Baltic countries (Denmark, Estonia, Finland, the Faroe Islands, Greenland, Iceland, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, Sweden, and Åland.)

Example - meeting in Vilnius Januar 2026



Vilnius  
defensive wall  
bastion



photographer Māris  
Grunskis

**FORTRESS PHOTOGRAPHY - ART  
RESIDENCIES PROJECT PROPOSAL**

preparing applicaion

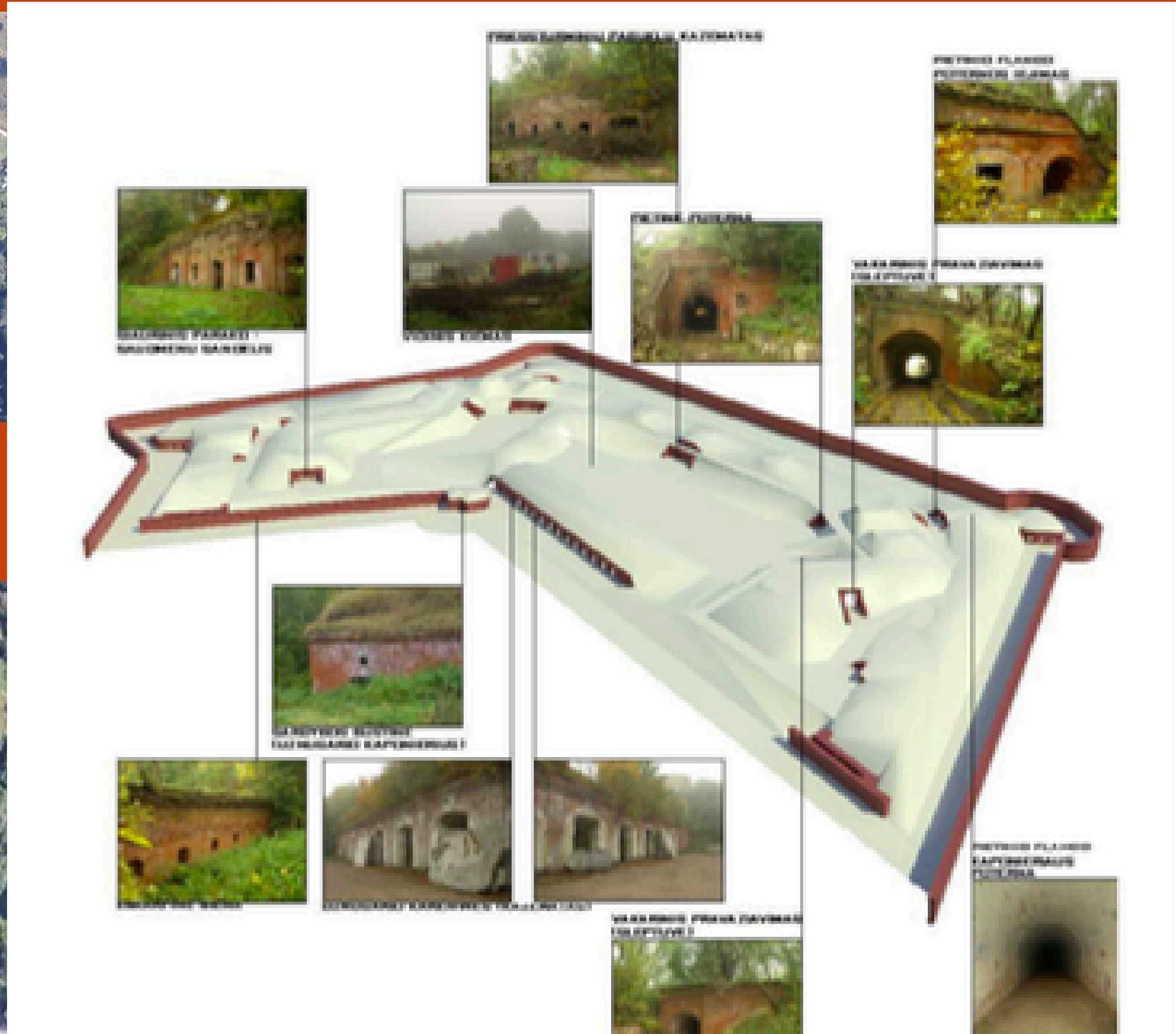




# OUR CASE



# Fort no.5





# OUR CASE



# Fort no.5



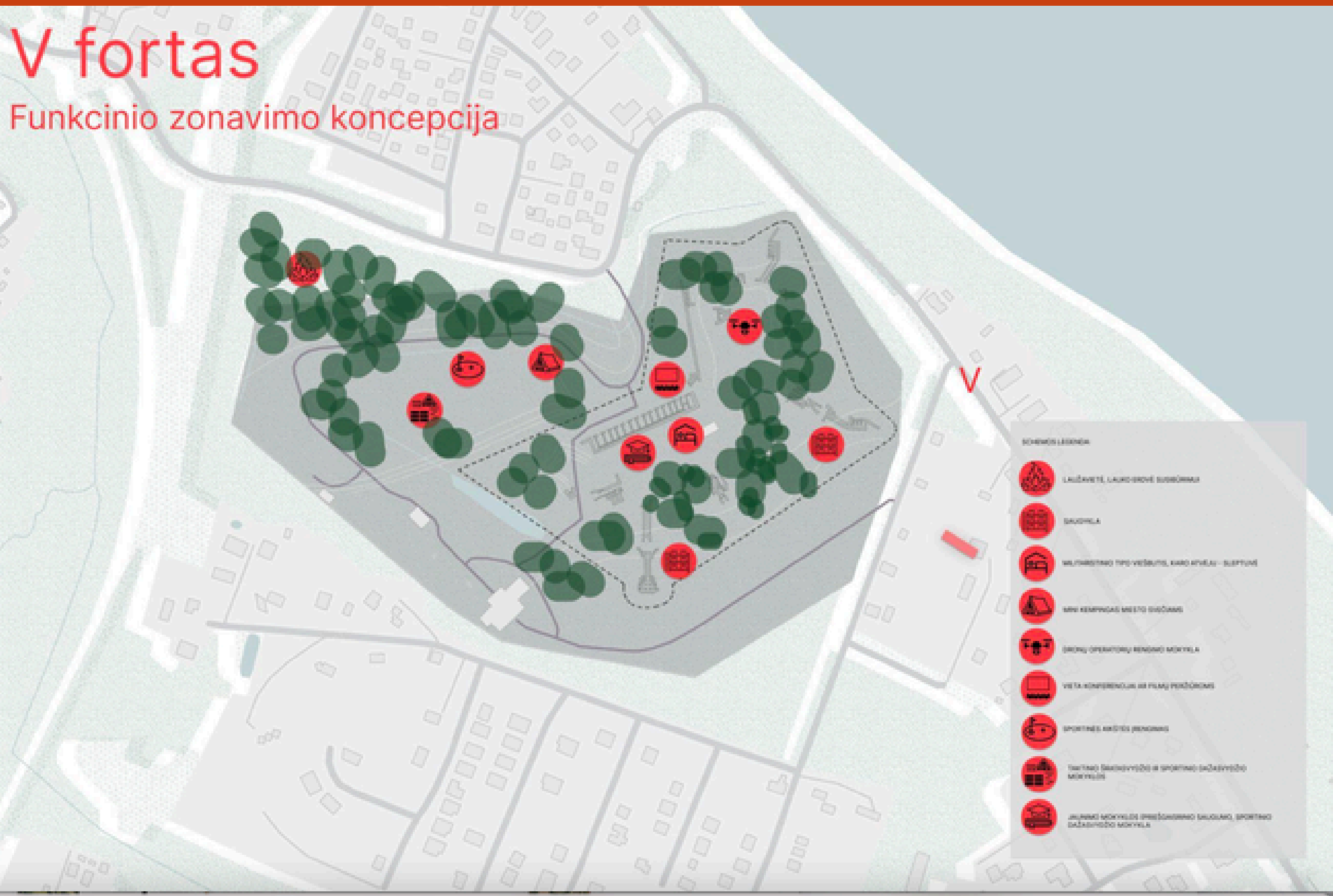


BALTIC  
ROUTE

OUR CASE



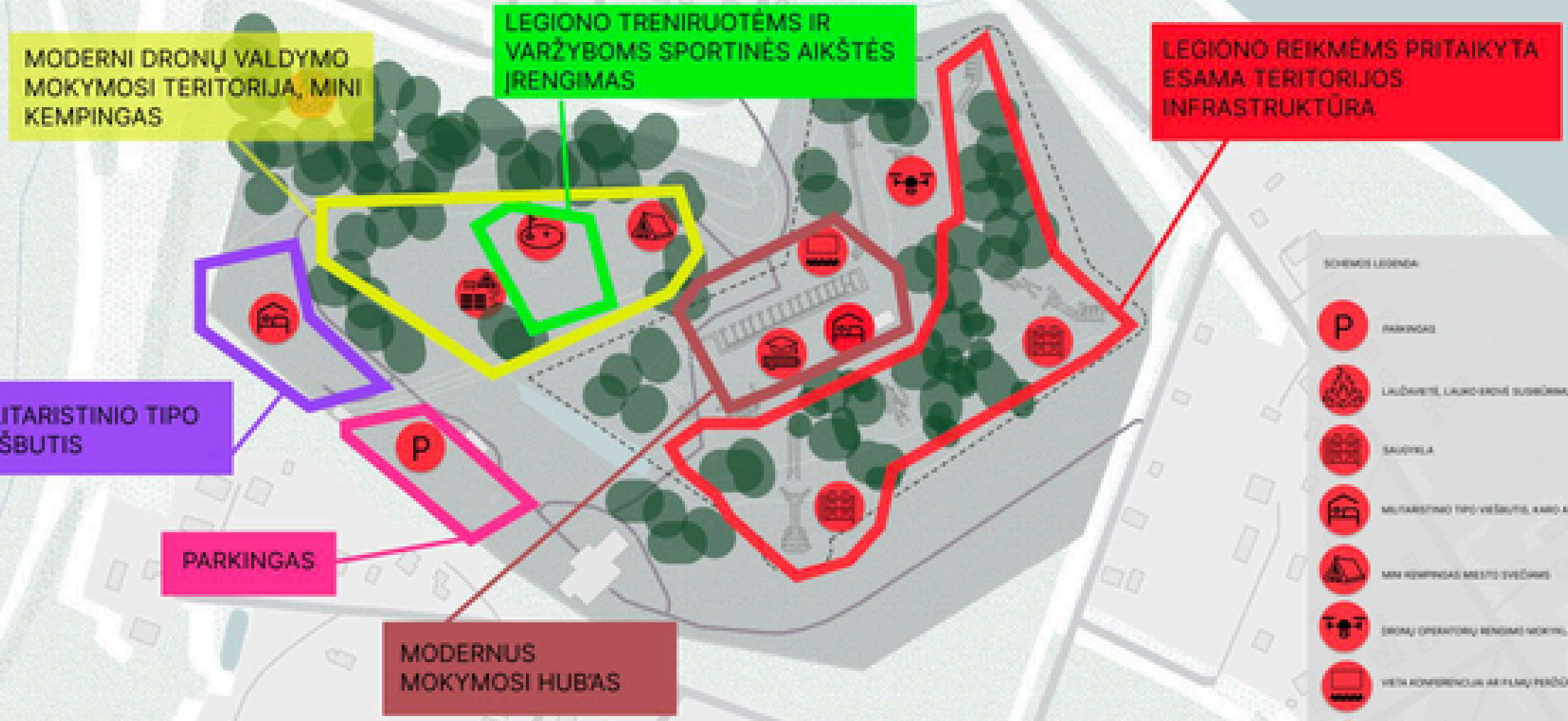
Fort no.5



European Heritage Days

## V fortas

### Funkcinio zonavimo koncepcija



- SCHEMOS LEGENDA:
- PARKINGAS
  - LAUŽAVETĖ, LAUKO ERKŲ SUSIŪBIMAI
  - SAUVIŅLA
  - MILITARISTINIO TIPO VIEŠBUTIS, KAMBARAVILAI - SLAPTUVĖ
  - MINI KEMPINGAS Miesto įrengimas
  - DRONŲ OPERATORIŲ REIKIMŲ MOKYKLĀ
  - VETŲ KOMPJUTERINIAI AR FILMŲ PERŽIŪRŲMS
  - SPORTINĖS AIKŠTĖS ĮRENGIMAS
  - Taktinio šauksmyviškos ir sportinio šauksmyviškos mokymos
  - Jaukimo mokymai ir šaudymo mokymai, sportinio šauksmyviškos mokymai



OUR CASE



Fort no.5



KULTŪROS  
PAVELDO  
DEPARTAMENTAS  
PRIE LIETUVOS RESPUBLIKOS  
KULTŪROS MINISTERIJOS

**Thank you for your attention !**