

FORTIC

**From remains Of the war to
the aRchiTecture of peace
in cross-border area of Italy-Croatia**

Final Conference

Meet the Speakers

15th September 2026
Circolo, Carrarina ul. 1, 52100, Pula (CRO)



SPEAKERS

The FORTIC Final Conference brings together experts and professionals from Croatia, Italy and across Europe with diverse experience in the conservation, management, sustainable use and valorization of fortified and cultural heritage.

Through three moderated panel discussions, speakers will share their expertise, experiences and perspectives on key challenges and opportunities related to the conservation, sustainable development and management of Adriatic fortifications.

PANEL 1

SAFEGUARD, REVITALIZE AND ENHANCE THE CULTURAL AND LANDSCAPE VALUES OF ADRIATIC FORTIFICATIONS THROUGH INTEGRATED CONSERVATION

Fiorenzo Meneghelli

Fiorenzo Meneghelli is an architect who graduated from the University of Venice and is National Vice-President of the Italian Institute of Castles. He is a member of ICOMOS-ICOFORT, ICOMOS-ICOFORT Italia and the EFFORTS/FORTE CULTURA Joint Scientific Committee. He is Head of the Study Centre on Fortified Systems at Forte Marghera in Venice, coordinator of the Network of Fortified Sites and a member of the Scientific Council of the Walled Cities of Veneto.

He is an expert in the restoration of historic buildings and the rehabilitation and enhancement of military architecture. He has organized national and international exhibitions and conferences on military architecture and is the author of numerous publications on the history and restoration of fortifications. On behalf of public institutions and as a consultant within European Community programmes, he develops strategies and projects for the recovery and enhancement of defensive systems.

Emil Jurcan

Emil Jurcan is an architect and Senior Assistant at the Institute of Art History in Zagreb. His professional and research work combines architecture, architectural theory and the conservation and reconstruction of cultural heritage. He has worked on several heritage conservation and renovation projects, including the Roman Theatre in Pula, Loggia Square in Opatlj and the Šubićevac Memorial Park in Šibenik.

In 2025, he completed his PhD at the Faculty of Architecture, University of Ljubljana, focusing on approaches and methods for the conservation of Roman monuments in Pula within the processes of urban modernization. He served as President of the Society of Architects of Istria between 2015 and 2019 and as President of the Association of Croatian Architects between 2017 and 2019.



Olha Tikhonova

Dr Olha Tikhonova is a Ukrainian architectural historian and conservator specializing in fortified heritage, adaptive reuse, cultural landscapes and community-centered conservation. As a Marie Skłodowska-Curie Research Fellow at the University of Seville, she leads SHARED_fort_Heritage, an EU-funded project examining early-modern colonial fortifications around the South China Sea as transcultural and often dissonant heritage.

Her research combines architectural and digital analysis with landscape interpretation, local knowledge and community participation. She has also developed low-cost approaches to heritage education and stewardship that engage children and local communities in documenting, understanding and caring for fortifications.

Within FORTE CULTURA, where she serves on the Scientific Committee and Board, she has contributed particularly to cooperation between European and Ukrainian fortified sites, including twinning initiatives and the development of a cross-border project concept connecting Šibenik and Ivano-Frankivsk. Her work on Ivano-Frankivsk explores how a former defensive landscape can become a “fortress for peace”: a living part of the city where preserved military spaces support culture, small businesses, crafts, education and community life.

Mauro Baronchelli

Mauro Baronchelli has spent his entire professional career in the design, organization and management of cultural activities and institutions, in both the public and private sectors. He has been involved in activities and projects across various fields, including history, theatre, opera, music, literature and, above all, ancient and contemporary art.

From 2015 to April 2025, he was Executive Director of Palazzo Grassi, Punta della Dogana and the Teatrino, the Venetian cultural spaces linked to the Pinault Collection, one of the largest contemporary art collections in the world. Previously, he coordinated the working group for the reopening of the Accademia Carrara in Bergamo.

He is part of the international working group that, through Associazione Microclima, is overseeing the restoration and management of Forte Sant'Andrea in the Venice Lagoon. Since November 2025, he has been Director of Fondazione Chiara e Francesco Carraro in Padua.

PANEL 2

INTEGRATE FORTIFICATIONS INTO SUSTAINABLE TERRITORIAL AND TOURISM DEVELOPMENT THROUGH CROSS-BORDER ROUTES, DE-SEASONALIZATION, AND SMART VISITOR MANAGEMENT

Nada Prodan Mraković

Nada Prodan Mraković has dedicated her professional career to the development of sustainable tourism and specialized tourism products, with a particular focus on connecting cultural, outdoor and eno-gastronomic tourism as important elements in extending the tourist season. During her 16 years as Head of the Buzet Tourist Board, she worked, among other initiatives, on the valorization of Petrapilosa Castle, while her subsequent work has involved the development and support of numerous projects linking cultural heritage with new tourism products.



Notable examples include Parenzana, a successful model for transforming historic infrastructure into an internationally recognized cycling tourism route, as well as projects such as Istra Inspirit, Svetvinčenat Castle, Pazin Castle and the Vlački Puti Ecomuseum. She is currently also involved in the implementation of the EU project Istra Ecoinclusive, in which Parenzana connects ecological and inclusive initiatives across the Croatian-Slovenian cross-border area.

Her work consistently focuses on sustainability, preservation of local landscapes, development of less tourism-intensive areas and the quality of life of local communities, guided by the principle that tourism products should create value not only for visitors, but first and foremost for the people who live in the destination.

Sanja Cinkopan Korotaj

Sanja Cinkopan Korotaj is the long-standing Director of the Pula Tourist Board and one of the key figures in developing and positioning Pula as a recognizable, year-round and sustainable tourism destination. Over more than two decades of work, she has initiated and contributed to numerous projects that have enriched the city's cultural, sports and tourism offer, including Lighting Giants, Verudela Art Park, Visualia Festival, Pula Marathon, Camino South Istria and Days of Antiquity, as well as the development of cycling and walking trails and other initiatives aimed at extending the tourist season.

She has received numerous awards and recognitions for her work, including Tourist Board Director of the Year, the CROMA Award in the Project Manager category and the Coat of Arms of the City of Pula for her contribution to the Lighting Giants project.

Today, her work places particular emphasis on sustainable destination management and achieving a balance between tourism development, preserving the city's identity and maintaining the quality of life of the local community.

Daniela Angelina Jelinčić

Daniela Angelina Jelinčić is a Senior Research Advisor at the Institute for Development and International Relations (IRMO) in Zagreb, where she coordinates the Center for Sustainable Development through Culture (CSDC). She holds a PhD in Ethnology from the University of Zagreb, and her research focuses on cultural tourism, cultural industries, cultural heritage management, cultural and tourism policies, creativity, experience economy and social innovation.

As a Fulbright Scholar in 2019/2020, she conducted research at the University of Georgia on the connection between sensory stimuli and emotions in creating cultural experiences. She teaches courses related to cultural tourism, cultural heritage management, creative industries, experience economy, innovation in culture and sustainable development in culture at several universities. She is the author and editor of numerous scientific and professional publications and has worked as a Council of Europe expert for cultural tourism.

Filippo Cailotto

Filippo Cailotto is President of FORTE CULTURA e.V., the European network and Cultural Route of fortified heritage, based in Berlin and active in 17 countries. An Italian cultural manager with more than 30 years of experience, he specialises in European cooperation, sustainable heritage management and heritage-based cultural tourism.



His work focuses particularly on transnational networking, participatory governance, stakeholder engagement, adaptive reuse and the integration of New European Bauhaus principles into fortified heritage management. He holds a Master's degree in Economics and General Management from Bocconi University in Milan and a European Diploma in Cultural Project Management from the Hicter Foundation in Brussels. He has led and supported EU-funded cooperation projects and has served as an external evaluator for the Horizon Europe Programme.

PANEL 3

STRENGTHEN PARTICIPATORY GOVERNANCE AND COMMUNITY OWNERSHIP THROUGH MULTI-STAKEHOLDER PROCESSES

Paola Orlić

Paola Orlić is Head of the Administrative Department for Culture and Civil Society of the City of Pula–Pola, an art historian, curator and cultural producer. Her extensive professional experience includes the development and production of national and international cultural projects, curatorial work and research into Pula's architectural heritage.

She studied Philosophy and Art History at the University of Zagreb and continued her studies in Art History at Ohio University in the United States. Her professional career includes extensive work in cultural production, curatorial practice and the development of cultural and artistic projects. She is the author and editor of numerous professional and art publications, including the trilogy "Pula – Grad Interval", which explores the specific theme of Pula's forgotten architectural heritage.

Đurđa Vrljević Šarić

Đurđa Vrljević Šarić is Head of the International Cooperation and Projects Department at Fortress of Culture Šibenik, where she has worked since 2017. A journalist by profession, she has focused her professional work on sustainability and inclusivity in cultural heritage management, the preparation and implementation of EU-funded projects, and the promotion of the institution's work within European professional networks.

Today, Fortress of Culture Šibenik is recognized in Croatia and across the European Union as an example of good practice in cultural heritage management. The institution was established by the City of Šibenik in 2016 with the aim of transforming the city's restored fortresses into sustainable, year-round cultural hubs that actively contribute to the development of the local community. Today, it manages five heritage and cultural sites – St. Michael's Fortress, Barone Fortress, St. John's Fortress, Arsen House of Art and the Croatian Coral Centre Zlarin.

By integrating these sites into the city's cultural and social life, over the past decade the institution has achieved a significant transformative impact, fostering cultural development, sustainable tourism, economic activity and citizen engagement, while contributing to Šibenik's development as a contemporary, culturally regenerated Mediterranean city.

Irina Belušić Maggi

Irina Belušić Maggi is an architect and urban planner, currently working as a Consultant for Spatial Planning at the Town of Labin. She graduated in Architecture, with a specialization in Urbanism, from the University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Architecture, in 1998. Her professional experience focuses on urban planning, architectural and interior design, with particular expertise in the renovation and valorization of Labin's industrial and mining heritage.

She coordinated and contributed to several major heritage projects and international initiatives, including the EU project ATRIUM, and has authored and co-authored publications on the architectural heritage of Labin and Raša, its preservation, reuse and valorization. She served as Vice-President of the ATRIUM Association from 2013 to 2022 and has been a member of its Scientific Committee since 2023.

About ATRIUM

ATRIUM – Architecture of Totalitarian Regimes of the 20th Century in Europe's Urban Memory is a Cultural Route of the Council of Europe connecting European cities and territories that share an architectural heritage associated with the totalitarian regimes of the 20th century. The network promotes the critical, informed and sustainable valorization of this heritage, with particular emphasis on local community engagement, dialogue, interpretation and international cooperation.

About FORTE CULTURA

FORTE CULTURA is the European Cultural Route of Fortified Monuments, dedicated to promoting and connecting Europe's fortified heritage. The network brings together fortresses, fortified towns, citadels, castles, defence systems and other military heritage sites across Europe, supporting their preservation, sustainable use and development as cultural and tourism destinations. Through networking, knowledge exchange and joint tourism initiatives, FORTE CULTURA promotes fortified monuments as living heritage and places for culture, education and visitor experiences.

