

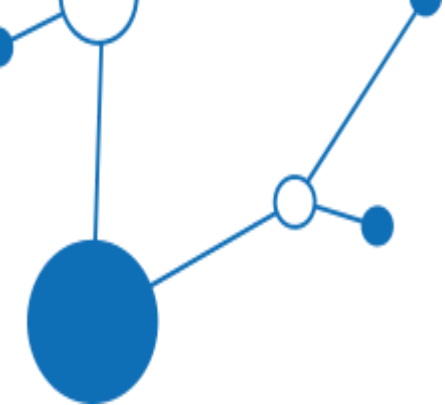
D.4.2.1

REPORT

SECOND JOINT TRANSNATIONAL  
STRATEGIC WORKSHOP WITH SIDE  
EVENTS

9-11 June 2025





# D.2.4.1

## Second joint transnational strategic workshop with side events

### Rovereto (IT) 9-11/06/2025

### Deliverable description:

This report and the attached video (1x) are due to resume the Second joint international strategic workshop that took place in Rovereto between the 9th and the 11th of June 2025.

### Introduction:

From June 9th to 11th, 2025, the Italian Historical War Museum in Rovereto (MITAG) hosted a three-day meeting for the Gov4PeaCE project, part of the Interreg Central Europe program. The gathering brought together partners (PPs) from eight European countries and ten associated partners (APs), all dedicated to the valorization, management, and study of World War I historical heritage from a European perspective. The meeting, divided in workshop moments, study trips, presentations and public event activities, was meant to analyse the steps done in defining model(s) for the management of the historical heritage in different European regions, within a transborder and multifunctional perspective. Furthermore, during the meeting the Piloting Activity was presented, and the participants could analyse the management of the heritage in Trentino, where volunteers, associations and territorial specificity play a crucial role.

## A. Day one: Monday 9th June 2025

### Project Progress and Integrated Governance Model, presentations and workshop activity

#### Morning:

The first day of the meeting focused on presenting the results of the project's initial year. This included a comprehensive **mapping of World War I historical heritage management systems** across Europe, with examples from France, Belgium, Italy, Austria, Slovenia, Slovakia, Hungary, Poland, and Ukraine. The primary objective of this mapping was to identify prevalent management models and best practices that could be transferred to areas where heritage exists but is managed at a less mature stage.

The first day of project meetings featured also insightful presentations from various project partners detailing their activities over the past year. Giulio Focardi from OsunWes, the company tasked with developing the project model, presented on the **significant progress made in recent months**. His work commenced with the distribution and collection of surveys during the initial six months of the project. These surveys were instrumental in constructing a **digital tool** designed to help individual sites or networks of sites assess their maturity levels. This tool, currently in an advanced model phase, will be developed into a user-friendly interface and enriched with content in the coming months. It will serve not only for **self-assessment** but also as a crucial instrument for **implementing management pathways** in cultural, tourism, and institutional heritage contexts.

Following this, Dr. Jean-Baptiste Hintjens of the In Flanders Fields Museum presented on the **piloting activities** conducted in recent weeks. For the Polish-Slovak functional region, he was accompanied by Tina Komac (Triglav National Park), while for the Slovenian-Italian functional region he was assisted by Kamil Ruzsata (Jagiellonian University) and Stephen Lodewyck (In Flanders Fields Museum). Alongside these colleagues from the Mentoring & Evaluation Team, they performed fieldwork to generate reports that will integrate with the model. Crucially, **the model itself underwent rigorous testing and examination by Italian, Slovenian, Polish, and Slovakian stakeholders**. This exercise proved invaluable for testing the model's efficacy and refining it where necessary. Piloting activities are set to continue over the next few weeks in the missing territories, to improve the model through different areas sensibilities.

## Afternoon:

In the afternoon, the 80 participants were divided into five working groups for a practical activity. After the previous meeting, it was decided to organize more active moments during these international encounters. For this reason, in the previous weeks themes and aims of the single groups were decided, and a workshop activity was prepared by the leaders of every group. These groups were tasked with developing initial drafts for:

- A common Letter of Intent, or **Shared Charter of Intentions** (group 1)
- A **preliminary communication plan**, both in cultural (group 2) and tourist (group 3) direction
- **Minimum quality standards** for managing outdoor historical sites (group 4), with an eye toward future projects (group 5).

Following, the conclusions every group reached:

### 1. Shared Charter of Intentions and Mission

In this group, work has focused on **drafting a shared charter** of mission and intentions, outlining objectives, rules, language, and tools for the entities participating in the GOV4Peace network (e.g., agreement on terminology). Or at least this was supposed to be; but, in fact, the participant discussed more in the general objectives and directions, a work on such a document needs.

This workshop focused on the possible necessity of creating a shared charter of good practice to serve as a **guideline for all project partners**. Taking inspiration from three previous charts, the participants discussed the opportunity of producing such a document for the members of GOV4PeaCE project, or for at least the ones who will participate to the next level of networking. The discussion has been very interesting and motivated, analyzing **deep different sensitives and trying to understand the differences between members of the network**.

From the outset, we clarified that this charter should be interpreted as **offering guidance** on how to present the history of the First World War, **not as a mandatory requirement**. This aspect

is very important, especially after what emerged during Dr. Viola Scalacci speech (day 3), because of the relevance of respecting different histories and aims.

There were three examples used as inspiration - the *Carta di Impegni Musei della Rete Trentino Grande Guerra* from - Italy; the *Ethical and Multi-voiced Remembrance Tourism charter* from Flanders, Belgium; the *Magna Carta* (original document, not the new draft version) from Liberation Route Europe - that were given to all participants. These, as emerged in previous analysis (D.1.2.1 Assessment Report) are three very different documents. The first one is more a guideline to practicalities, the second has more to do with TOV and ethical mission of the network, where the last one does with the respect of every area's peculiarity.

It was evident from the beginning that this would be no easy task. The discussion was lively and revealed a **multitude of perspectives**, alongside some potential pitfalls. Even if the participants of the group were mostly from Western-Europe, the geographical and historical differences between vision and mission of a Charter emerged clearly.

Some participants referred to the **core principles from UNESCO World Heritage**, which provides clear guidelines on presenting the history of the heritage. For instance, they advocate against using the word 'enemy' as it directly influences the reader's perception because in any war, no one truly wins; each party loses more than they gain. However, in the context of that historical period, people did use the term 'enemy'. Therefore by omitting this term, the following question is raised: "would this mean we are rewriting history or not?". Respecting historical facts and the feeling of the people living the horror of war is not on a second level in comparison with politeness and correct language use, so finding the **equilibrium** between these two dimensions, as emerged during the discussion, is a difficult path.

Another subject was the statement that **war is not fun nor exciting**. It is important to contextualise the different points of view as well as the available sources.

The musealization of history doesn't have a single form or dimension. Individual museums or open-air museums can choose different approaches, ranging from more modern to more didactic. This makes alignment difficult within a **multidimensional and transnational context like the GOV4PeaCE project**. And it shouldn't happen, either: each territory and each institution must follow its chosen path.

At the same time, however, it's crucial for network members to establish certain essential elements in narrating the history of the First World War, because some aspects cannot be transcended. War cannot and should not be depicted as inherently beautiful, heroic, or courageous. Instead, a set of common elements must be found for a more balanced narrative that is dedicated to peace. "Heroes of the skies" certainly existed and will continue to be recognized as such, but we must pay careful attention to **how we discuss war, especially for future generations**.

The group concluded that it will be very important to put as much nuance as possible into this charter, and to do that, a **participating process is necessary**. It was useful to confront with Dr. Scalacci, who presented the process that is bringing the LRE Foundation to the rewriting of their famous *Magna Carta*.

First, a working group was formed, primarily comprising historians and experts in the field who either volunteered or were invited for their specialized knowledge and experience. Through a series of working sessions, this group developed an **initial draft of the new *Magna Carta***,

accompanied by a set of supporting documents. These documents explained the various proposals and alternative options. Members of the foundation were then involved in a consultative capacity, providing **feedback and opinions** from the grassroots level. This led to a **lengthy but effective co-construction process**, resulting in the current, though still not final, formulation of the *Magna Carta*.

It's therefore crucial to apply mixed processes in initiatives like this—**neither entirely bottom-up nor purely top-down**. A completely bottom-up approach risks significant dispersion and the creation of an excessive number of caveats and rules, driven by the need to accommodate everyone's sensitivities. Conversely, a purely top-down approach carries multiple risks, including a lack of attention to individual peculiarities and a more or less explicit rejection of something imposed from above.

Clearly, this process will demand time and energy, but this is likely the right path forward. In the next months, the GOV4PeaCE group will activate a process, as wished from the whole group after the presentation at the end of the work group session.

## 2. External minimal historical informational materials

This group concentrated on defining the common minimum information elements that all sites adhering to the network must adopt (e.g., a bilingual brochure).

Several experts into the direct management of WWI heritage were involved in this group. To this group was assigned the task of identifying the **fundamental characteristics and necessary standards for external promotional materials**, specifically **signage and brochures**, intended to **illustrate the historical heritage** of the Great War, has meticulously identified the following key standards to guide future development:

- all **content must be clear, concise, and rigorously verified** for historical and geographical accuracy. It is crucial that the information precisely refers to the heritage it aims to promote, avoiding any vagueness or approximation. The emphasis should be on the clarity and accuracy of the illustration, even if this means prioritizing quality over the sheer quantity of information conveyed;
- the **inclusion of a map** is essential to clearly delineate the geographical context in which the historical heritage is situated. This will provide visitors with a better understanding of the location and its surroundings;
- all content must be **expressed in at least two languages**: the local language of the area and English. Furthermore, the group strongly recommends evaluating the inclusion of additional languages in border regions to cater to a broader range of visitors;
- it is imperative to include the **logos of both the site manager and any project financiers** who have contributed to the realization of the promotional material. This ensures proper recognition and transparency;
- a clear reference to the **author** or source of all written and iconographic content is required. This practice upholds intellectual property rights and allows for further exploration by interested parties;
- each piece of promotional material must include a clear **contact reference**, such as a telephone number, email address, or website. This will enable visitors to easily reach out for any needs or further inquiries;

- a careful assessment of the impact of **signage** on the surrounding landscape and environment is crucial. The aim is to avoid an excessive proliferation of installations, particularly in locations that are already subject to multiple enhancement projects, thereby preserving the aesthetic integrity of the area.
- a comprehensive **maintenance and replacement plan for all signage must be prepared**. This proactive approach will prevent the deterioration of signs over time, addressing issues such as illegibility and overlapping installations that can currently be observed in the territory.
- In instances, where technologies requiring an **internet connection** for visitors (such as QR codes) are employed, it is vital to assess the actual availability of data connections in the area. Signs incorporating such technologies should be strategically positioned in locations with reliable connectivity to ensure their functionality.
- Finally, a **coordinated graphic design** should be adopted across all tools used for promoting the Great War heritage. This coordinated approach should ideally be implemented at least on a regional or district level, ensuring visual consistency and strengthening brand recognition.

The group reached consensus on these ten rules, after analyzing the heritage they manage, what they have and what they miss.

### 3. Joint cross-boarder agenda

The aim was to establish some common elements for the communication and promotion of individual sites, as well as the network as a whole (e.g., a map indicating all sites).

#### 1. Purpose of the Analysis

The purpose of this analysis was to summarize the opinions of workshop participants regarding effective tools for promoting the heritage of World War I and compare them with global and European statistical data and current trends in communication, promotion, and cultural tourism. This comparison allows for the validation of workshop outcomes and helps to formulate practical recommendations for institutions, organizations, and professionals working in the field of historical heritage promotion.

#### 2. Workshop Results - Identified Promotional Tools

During the workshops, participants identified the following promotional tools as relevant for communicating World War I heritage, specifying their effectiveness for different age groups:

Classification of communication tools by target group:

##### A. Traditional Communication Tools

Books - Useful for all age groups, but content should be age-appropriate, especially for children and youth.

Maps - A universal tool. Illustrated versions are suitable for children; digital maps can attract younger audiences.

Guidebooks - Valuable for adults and seniors; youth may prefer online versions.

Articles and newspapers - Considered less effective due to limited interactivity and reach among younger audiences.

### B. Events and Education

Outdoor events - Highly effective across all age groups. WWI themes should be one of many elements, communicated with a positive message.

Workshops and lectures - Primarily aimed at youth (e.g., schools) but also appealing to adults and seniors when hosted by cultural institutions.

Quests - Particularly attractive to children and families; offer interactive learning through play.

Themed tours - Targeted mainly at adults and seniors, organized by local tourism groups and heritage enthusiasts.

### C. Traditional and Digital Media

Radio and TV - Still effective in reaching older audiences.

Websites - Preferred by adults for easy access to information.

Mobile apps - Mainly for youth but also useful for adults and seniors when well-designed (e.g., as web apps).

Virtual guides and tours - Especially important for seniors and people with disabilities, enhancing accessibility.

### D. Social Media

- Facebook - Most used by adults.
- Instagram - Popular with youth and adults, and to a lesser extent seniors; visually engaging format.
- YouTube - High potential across all age groups due to its video format.
- X (formerly Twitter) - Limited reach, mostly among younger users.
- TikTok - Primarily for younger audiences; ideal for storytelling through short, dynamic formats.
- Other platforms - Can be tailored to specific campaign needs.

### E. Other Promotional Tools

Gadgets and promotional materials - Appealing to all ages, help with memorability and image-building.

Innovative methods - Importance of involving influencers, creating targeted content for niche groups (e.g., historians), and promoting sustainability and inclusivity.

## 3. Global and European Data and Trends

### 3.1. Social Media Usage (2025)

Globally: approx. 5.3 billion users (64% of global population).

Europe: 680-730 million users, with 70-80% penetration in EU regions.

Average daily usage: 2 hours 20-35 minutes.

Top platforms:

Facebook - 3.07 billion users

YouTube - 2.5 billion

Instagram - 2.0 billion

TikTok - 1.6-2.0 billion

WhatsApp - 2 billion

LinkedIn - 930 million (primarily professional use)

### 3.2. Age and Social Media Use

TikTok - Dominated by users aged 13-24 (approx. 60%).

Instagram - Engages mostly 18-44 age group.

Facebook - Popular among 25-65+, especially adults and seniors.

YouTube - Used by all age groups.

Seniors (65+) - Least active, but increasing presence on Facebook and YouTube.

### 3.3. Social Media in Tourism Promotion

93-95% of social media users encounter travel-related content.

Instagram and TikTok are the main sources of travel inspiration.

Growing trend of “Instagram Tourism” - visiting places because of their online popularity.

By 2025, influencer marketing is expected to exceed \$28 billion - a significant portion related to travel.

Trends like slow tourism, sustainable travel, family tourism, and intergenerational tourism increasingly influence how historical heritage is promoted.

## 4. Validation of Workshop Results Against Data and Trends

#### 4. Validation of Workshop Results Against Data and Trends

Workshop Insight	Validation	Comments
Social media reaches all age groups	✓ Confirmed	Different platforms suit different age groups
TikTok is for young people only	✓ Confirmed	60% of users are aged 13–24
Facebook is suitable for seniors	✓ / ◆ Partially	Seniors use it, but also common among 25–55 age group
Quests and mobile apps are effective for young users	✓ Confirmed	Gamification boosts engagement
Workshops are mainly for youth	◆ Partially	Adults also increasingly interested via cultural centers
Traditional publications are still effective	✓ Confirmed	If modernized and adapted to digital/visual formats
Virtual tours are ideal for seniors and people with disabilities	✓ Confirmed	Aligns with inclusivity and accessibility trends

#### 5. Key Conclusions

- The workshop findings are largely consistent with global and European communication and tourism trends.
- Social media is the dominant promotional channel for tourism, especially among younger audiences.
- Communication strategies must be segmented by age group and digital proficiency - no one-size-fits-all solution.
- Traditional tools (books, maps, radio, events) remain relevant when updated and supported by modern formats.
- Virtual experiences and apps are crucial for ensuring accessibility and multi-generational engagement.
- Trends such as immersive travel, local storytelling, and heritage trails offer strong foundations for WWI heritage promotion.

#### 6. Recommendations for Practitioners in WWI Heritage Promotion

The promotion of historical heritage—such as regional connections to World War I—requires a **modern strategy that combines historical awareness with engaging formats**. An effective strategy should be based on audience segmentation, channel diversity, inclusive storytelling, and accessibility.

##### A. Audience Segmentation - Age-Appropriate Communication

Promotional activities must be designed for distinct age groups, respecting their unique needs and media habits:

**Youth (12-25 years):** Prefer dynamic, engaging social media (TikTok, Instagram, YouTube), mobile apps, outdoor games (quests), and interactive events. Focus on short videos, storytelling, and gamification.

**Adults (26-60 years):** Value reliable content on websites and in guidebooks. Active on Facebook and Instagram. Enjoy guided tours and cultural events.

**Seniors (60+ years):** Prefer traditional media (TV, radio), printed materials, and calmer experiences like virtual tours and guided visits. Prioritize clarity and ease of access.

#### B. Diversity of Formats

Using a mix of traditional and digital tools significantly extends campaign reach. Effective combinations include:

- Mobile app + printed map
- Outdoor event + live social media coverage
- Digital guide + printed brochure

Such approaches engage multiple audience types and boost participation.

#### C. Positive Historical Messaging

WWI heritage should **not only focus on tragedy** but also highlight its role in **shaping local and European identity**. The narrative should encourage peace, education, reflection, and tourism—presenting history through themes of memory, contemporary relevance, and post-conflict rebuilding.

#### D. Accessibility and Special Needs Inclusion

Heritage promotion must be inclusive and accessible to all. Recommended actions:

- Develop virtual tours and guides
- Provide audio-described content
- Use plain language
- Employ larger fonts and clear visuals
- Create content tailored for seniors and people with disabilities
- Combining Offline and Online Engagement

Hosting outdoor events (historical reenactments, guided walks, themed festivals) together with online presence (live streams, photo galleries, event videos) increases visibility and attracts diverse audiences.

## SUMMARY

Effective promotion of World War I heritage should be **multi-channel, age-appropriate, positively framed, and inclusive**. Blending digital and traditional tools, offering educational and emotional experiences, and ensuring accessibility can increase interest in cultural tourism and strengthen local identity.

## 4. Cross-boarder product

Research and definition of future pathways for the project's continuation have been the subject of this working table (e.g., funding streams).

The group was composed by different members of Project Partners and Associated Partners of GOV4PeaCE Project, like Domenico Marco Papale from General Direction of Culture - Lombardy Region, Tomaz Konrad from GECT Nova Gorica-Gorizia, Federica Raggi from Regional Agency for Agriculture and Forestry Services - Lombardy Region, Monica Orchel from the Municipality of Gorlice, and representative of PromoTurismoFVG, Alda Vicenza, the Soča Regional Development Centre and the Walk of Peace Foundation, Masa Klavora (Pot miru/Walk of peace).

After an introductory presentation of each of the members of the working group, everyone resumed it's own experience with **EU projects and cooperation**, explaining different project activities and rules in the team. The group shared and discussed the **problems emerged by working trans-nationally** and with the difficulties emerged in developing EU projects. It emerged that some problems and difficulties were common, so there is a perspective on avoiding them in the future.

The participants discussed the **positive part** of working internationally: what opportunities were built during past activities? They also analyzed **future calls** the activated PPs and APs could apply in the future.

During the discussion, it became clear that the themes that unite the realities sitting around that table are:

- the **involvement of local realities** and specialists, especially young people;
- in the sustainable development of areas, the development of **quality tourism products**, public transport, the maintenance of heritage sites and trails. The main focus should be on developing sustainable tourism, also based on cultural and natural attractions, with the aim to **help local economy**.

The team agreed to look into the possibility of **preparing projects for the calls** for proposals still to come in the autumn (Interreg Danube, Central Europe, Mediterranean, and also CERV).

## 5. Heritage minimum access level

Starting from a case study, participants have reflected on common minimum protection objectives (e.g., restoration funds).

The discussion started with the presentation of the case study concerning the restoration and enhancement of Monte Corno Battisti (Trentino, Italy), which was carried out by high-altitude volunteers. Then, the presentation of the work on the "Visualization of military heritage in the current landscape by comparing LIDAR features" which had been conducted by Joel Aldrighettoni on behalf of the University of Bergamo and ERSAF - Stelvio National Park in the Lombardy area, using scientific instruments and university expertise, followed.

This second, scientific approach was compared with the case study of the rediscovery of cemeteries on the border between Ukraine and Poland. These cases served to generate discussion on the minimum standards and fundamental basic steps required to enable the enhancement of

a WWI site, even if managed by volunteers, with the objective of achieving a shared minimum quality standard on a transregional scale in Central-Eastern Europe.

### Summary of the Outcomes

The cases informed a 7-Phase Step-by-Step Guide for small-site restoration, emphasizing the necessary blend of historical rigor and practical implementation. Key phases included:

- Historical Research & Mapping (3-6 months).
- Permissions & Agreements (6-9 months, including cultural heritage approval).
- Cleaning & Restoration (6-12 months, with professional support when needed).
- Signage & Multimedia Accessibility.
- Guided Tours Setup.
- Ongoing Maintenance.
- Promotion & Communication.

Crucially, the guide stressed that a bottom-up approach with active local community involvement (volunteers, schools, residents) was essential for the sustainability and success of any heritage project, as top-down interventions risked failure without proper local grounding.

### Step-by-Step Guide for World War I Small Site Restoration

This guide was developed among the working group participants, starting from a concrete case study.

#### **Phase 1: Historical Research and Mapping**

Estimated duration: 3-6 months

- Study of historical maps, archives, oral testimonies was completed
- Field surveys with GPS and comparison to current cartography were conducted
- Initial sharing of results with the local community to begin engagement took place

#### **Phase 2: Permissions and Agreements**

Estimated duration: 6-9 months

- Dialogue with the municipality, region, and any park or forestry entities was established
- Authorizations from the Superintendence of Cultural Heritage were requested
- Agreements with landowners were drafted

#### **Phase 3: Cleaning and Restoration**

Estimated duration: 6-12 months (in seasonal phases)

- Removal of vegetation and hazardous materials was performed
- Conservation work on trenches and fortifications was carried out (autumn/spring)
- Technical support was brought in if needed (engineers, archaeologists, speleologists)
- Constant monitoring and safety checks were ensured

#### **Phase 4: Signage and Multimedia Accessibility**

Estimated duration: 3-6 months

- Designing and installing informative signage was completed
- An audio guide was produced and recorded

- A dedicated small website or app with historical content was developed

### Phase 5: Guided Tours Setup

Estimated duration: 3-4 months (plus ongoing updates)

- Local guides or experts were selected and trained
- Routes were defined and a seasonal calendar was created
- Activities for schools, hiking groups, and tourists were established

### Phase 6: Ongoing Maintenance

Duration: recurring every 6-12 months

- Planning for routine and special maintenance was established
- Cleaning, signage updates, and trail upkeep were performed
- Local volunteers were involved for small interventions

### Phase 7: Promotion and Communication

Estimated duration: 6-9 months (plus ongoing promotion)

- A documentary, interviews, and promotional materials were produced
- A communication strategy through social media, local press, and events was implemented
- Collaboration with local tourism offices and historical site networks was initiated

### **Key Note: Community Involvement was Essential**

For historical sites, the crucial factor was the interest and involvement of the local community. Engaging local volunteer groups or associations from the very beginning ensured the project's sustainability and success.

A “top-down” intervention designed by external institutions, without proper local grounding, was unlikely to take root effectively.

Without the active participation of the local community (associations, schools, residents), the project risked failing or remaining incomplete. A bottom-up approach was essential for small-scale sites restoration.

## **B. Day two: Tuesday 10th June 2025**

### **Study trip in the surrounding of Rovereto**

#### **1. Field visit to Monte Zugna:**

The second day of the International Workshop was dedicated to a **field visit to the historical site of Monte Zugna, near Rovereto** (Italy). The Monte Zugna Historical Site has a certain importance in the historical context of the Southern Front (Austro-Hungarian Italian front), due to the combination of alpine trench-war and logistic programming by both sides. The enormous amount of heritage (from trenches to tunnels, from cemeteries to water-collection systems) is interesting from a cultural perspective, and the efforts made by local entities, such as the

Autonomous Province of Trento, the Sovrintendenza dei beni culturali, the War History Museum of Rovereto, the volunteers and so on, have been huge: more than 300 sites are mapped, signed and a brief description has been posed to evidence the presence of something interesting for visitors.

Despite its significant historical interest and past involvement in **notable territorial musealisation and historical heritage valorisation projects**—as previously detailed—the site exhibits a range of fragilities. These weaknesses became particularly evident during our recent study trip. This site was specifically chosen as the destination for the second day of the GOV4PeaCE workshop activities precisely because of this profound disconnect.

On one hand, the site boasts several inherent strengths: it's historically captivating, features accommodation facilities midway along its path capable of hosting a large number of visitors, and is central to remembrance activities, complete with a commemorative church. Furthermore, its trails are clearly marked and highlighted. And yet, despite these advantages, the site **does not attract a substantial number of visitors**.

Several factors contribute to this low visitor engagement. For instance, **school tourism**, a cornerstone of cultural and historical tourism in the Rovereto area, is effectively excluded due to the presence of a road only accessible by small-sized minibuses. Moreover, **trekking tourists show limited interest**, as the site is geographically isolated, not connected to other hiking routes, and lacks challenging mountain paths. Simultaneously, families and casual walkers ("camminatori della domenica," as we say in Italian) appear to be largely uninterested, even though the site is conveniently located near populated areas and the valley, from which a large influx of visitors could potentially originate.

Another significant weakness stems from the **absence of a robust social fabric**. There's a noticeable lack of local associations, volunteers, or informal groups. As highlighted during the development of our project model, these **community-based initiatives are the lifeblood for sustaining sites**, especially those outdoor locations that are not formally musealised or institutionalized. Without this active community involvement, it becomes challenging to maintain vibrancy and engagement at the site.

## 2. Piloting activity programming, HU-SL-PL:

During the second day of the meeting, partners from Slovakia and Poland, and the colleagues that during WP2 will take care of the piloting activity, jointly with the external experts that took care of developing the model, had a brief meeting to decide the further steps for the development of the project in their functional area. The specific objective of the GOV4PeaCE project is to **test and implement the collaboratively developed innovative WWI heritage governance model called CEWoP**. This experimentation will take place in three distinct functional territories, selected to represent different levels of maturity and complexity within their existing governance framework, in the next months (autumn/winter 2025). The main intent of these pilot projects is twofold: to **verify the acceptability by stakeholders of a heritage governance** that is multi-dimensional and cross-border, and to establish whether the proposed integrated approach and **shared governance tools can effectively trigger sustainable socio-economic development** in remote and declining areas.

The three functional territories involved in the experimentation have been initially defined based on their phase of governance development. The first is a **mature functional territory**, represented by Italy and Slovenia, with Austria holding a potential role as an Associated Partner

(AP). The second is a **developing functional territory**, comprising Poland and Slovakia, with Ukraine as a potential AP. Finally, the third is an **initial adjacent territory** in Hungary, which shows the potential to grow and become a true functional territory, supported by partners from Italy-Slovenia and Belgium, and with Romania as a potential AP. This diversification ensures that the CEWoP model is tested in various geopolitical and organisational contexts.

In the next months, the project partner In Flanders Fields Museum (IFFM) will take care of the piloting activity, monitoring the effective actions taken by the partners and mentoring the governance model(s) defined in the first work package.

The Representatives of Slovakia and Poland and, with the participation of Project Leader and WP leader, as well with the help of external expert Lorenza Salati, discussed together, pointing out some important elements, and defining the aspects to take care of during the next phase of the project.

The **museum concept developed in Gorlice** was at the heart of discussions as a key element for applying a new governance model. Although stakeholders showed significant interest in the museum itself, a certain divergence from the governance model was noted, highlighting the need for deeper contextualization and a better understanding of the link between the proposed model and the actual heritage management.

Despite this initial reluctance, the introduction of the model successfully raised fundamental questions. Crucial issues related to regional terminology, specific phrasing (such as "catchment area"), and language barriers emerged. Such difficulties could also be attributed to local heritage governance staff being unfamiliar with the needs of transnational cooperation and the specific skill set linked to it.

The model will help clarify stakeholder roles by triggering essential questions regarding heritage managers and stakeholders (e.g., the role and involvement of voluntary work and youth). However, to scale up the understanding and consolidate the use of the model, additional workshops and follow-up visits will be required, likely conducted by the model experts.

Practical challenges were also addressed during the discussions, including managing cemeteries, creating heritage trails, and connecting them to the museum. Added to this are concerns related to infrastructure (such as cemetery accessibility and road conditions) and bureaucratic issues (such as building permits and interpretation logistics).

Practical elements of the piloting, like timing, were also discussed.

## c. Day 3: Wednesday 11th June 2025

### Strategic Planning and Future Initiatives

The third and final day of the project was marked by a **successful public event**, open not only to professionals but also to the general public. The day was divided in two moments: morning session with open public event, afternoon session with practical discussion on further activities and programming of piloting activity with IT-SLO partners.

## 1. Open public event:

The morning session featured a series of engaging speakers, who captivated an interested audience.

First to speak was **Dr. Viola Scalacci, Communication Officer at the LRE Foundation**, an international project focused on narrating and developing itineraries around the theme of resistance against Nazi-Fascism. Dr. Scalacci not only shared the valuable experience of the Liberation Route but also underscored the critical need for a **participatory and collaborative approach in international and cross-border projects**. She highlighted that while the historical narratives of individual countries may diverge or converge, it's essential to emphasize specific national characteristics as much as common objectives. Allowing for singularity within shared paradigms, and embracing diverse aims and pathways, presents a significant challenge that demands both awareness and maturity to navigate effectively.

The second part of the morning was dedicated to exploring themes related to the international dimension of the GOV4PeaCE project and its future prospects. Following a video address by Dr. Kamil Ruszla of *Jagiellonian University*, the first international speaker was Dr. Frank Viltart from the *Direction de la Culture, Service Chemin des Dames et Mémoire*. Dr. Viltart was instrumental in overseeing the **application process for the Franco-Belgian cemeteries' UNESCO World Heritage** designation between 2015 and 2023. In his presentation, the historian detailed the journey undertaken and emphasized the immense value that such international recognition can bring. The French experience serves as a compelling example for the GOV4PeaCE project, which, as highlighted by **Irena Mars** from the *Slovenian Ministry of Culture*, aspires to build an international network of paths connected to the theme of the First World War.

To conclude the morning session, and prior to a dedicated Q&A, **Dr. Marco Marinuzzi** from the *EGTC of Gorizia* provided an insightful overview of the necessary steps and processes involved in applying for international recognition. His presentation offered **practical guidance** on navigating these complex applications. This ambitious plan envisions a series of intermediate milestones:

- Production of minimum quality standards.
- Expression of willingness to nominate existing paths in individual territories by late 2026.
- Formal submission of the candidacy by autumn 2027.
- Awaiting the outcome of the process from mid-2028 onwards.

This opportunity does not preclude other concurrent or future projects.

## 2. Piloting activity programming, IT-SLO:

Also the ITA-SLO functional area had a meeting during the conference in Rovereto, to discuss the topic of piloting activity and further steps. Representatives of the partners of this functional area, jointly with The Flanders Field Museum representative and the external experts, meet to analyse the situation in this functional area.

Discussions at the cross-border meeting for the Slovenian-Italian functional territory took a different path regarding the governance model, potentially reflecting a higher maturity level

within this territory. The emphasis was heavily placed on the involvement of cultural heritage governance in transnational programs and networks, particularly the **Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe**. Key topics included the process of registration for these routes and establishing a long-term transnational strategy for cooperation.

Technical aspects of the piloting activity (eg. timing, sites to be visited) have been discussed during this meeting.