



Walk of Peace

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF THE WORLD WAR I HERITAGE BETWEEN THE ALPS AND THE MEDITERRANEAN

Newsletter 2



Posoški razvojni center

The WALKofPEACE project provided funds for the renovation of the old "Cadorna" vehicle



Soča Valley Development Centre, in cooperation with the Municipality of Kobarid and the Voluntary Fire Brigade Kobarid, is completing the project of restoring the old military vehicle FIAT 15 TER, year 1911. All damaged and missing parts are, under the hands of experts from EKOEN AVTO, d.o.o. from Trbovlje, restored according to the originally preserved sketches of the vehicle.

The 109-year-old vehicle has been owned by the Kobarid Voluntary Fire

Brigade since around 1947 and is one of the oldest vehicles it operates. It was named after the general of the Italian army, Luigi Cadorna, who commanded the Italian forces in the First World War, when the fighting took place along the Soča River. Despite the fact that it has not been in operational use since 1960, it was admired on various protocol occasions.

The vehicle will soon get its place in the new mobile pavilion in front of the Fire Station in Kobarid, which will also be funded through the WALKofPEACE project.



Regione del Veneto

The Regione del Veneto, for the future “Walk of Peace” in the land of Venice



One of the most important actions planned by the Regione del Veneto as a partner of the Strategic Project WALKofPEACE is the definition of the itinerary which in connection with the Slovenian main route through the branches that cross the Friuli Venezia Giulia, will form the Veneto segment of the “Walk of Peace”.

In recent years, on the occasion of the Centenary, a census of historical sites and memories of the First World War was

undertaken throughout the Veneto region. In anticipation of a special thematic table in collaboration with local public institutions and the IUAV University in Venice, the Regione del Veneto recently completed a thorough review of its WWI heritage database throughout the Città Metropolitana di Venezia, which in according to predefined criteria and parameters, represent points of interest. Each element is presented in an informative record with a brief historical description.

All tangible heritage categories have been considered (battlefield sites, fortifications, military works and facilities, war cemeteries, ossuaries, shrines and monuments to the fallen soldiers, museums and collections), provided that is ensured, in whole or in part, their accessibility and/or visitability, which has been set as a necessary condition to respect the principle of consistency with the nature and the purposes of the Strategic



Project itself.

For the same reason this information has been complemented by the available data, where present in the specific context, on the supplementary resources already established, places of interest, attractions, itineraries and trails for sustainable tourism (nature reserves and parks, bike and bridle paths, waterways), with a view also to promote, as far as possible, network synergies for the enhancement of the territorial system as a whole.



Fundacija Poti miru v Posočju - PromoTurismoFVG

Walk of Peace as a long-distance path

During the First World War, between 1915 and 1917, the territory along the river Isonzo was part of the so-called Isonzo Front. Along the Isonzo, boys and men of many peoples fought, suffered and died. Numerous testimonies of this period have been preserved in nature that represent a cultural and historical heritage of national and international importance. Today they are connected by the Walk of Peace from the Alps to the Adriatic Sea.

*The war still echoes. But in the end
 peace will bless every valley and the old
 Truce of God will rest full of grace upon
 the mountains. Then we can visit the tombs
 of our loved ones and thank our dead.*

Dr. Julius Kugy

With the success of the application for the European cross-border program Interreg Italy-Slovenia, the opportunity was presented to expand the Walk of Peace into a real long-distance cross-border path. Along the path there will be signs and information signs, more than 350 points of historical interest. Visitors will have more than 400 kilometers of well-maintained trails at their disposal, 25 days of experience. The trail crosses 16 different municipalities in Italy, 9 in Slovenia. But if we look deeper than the simple route, the aim of the trail is to introduce visitors to the cultural-historical heritage, naturalistic points of interest, ethnographic peculiarities and tourist offers along the Isonzo Front, from the Julian Alps, through the Soča Valley, Venice, Gorizia, Karst, to the Adriatic Sea. So, in the cross-border space of Slovenia and Italy.

Along the Walk of Peace are of particular interest the open-air museums, such suggestive places, symbol of the history of the world, where visitors can immediately immerse themselves in the temporal dimension of a hundred years ago. The open-air museums are



located in authentic places, where the remains are well preserved or restored and at the same time easily accessible. Both the former Italian and Austro-Hungarian areas on the front are well cared for.

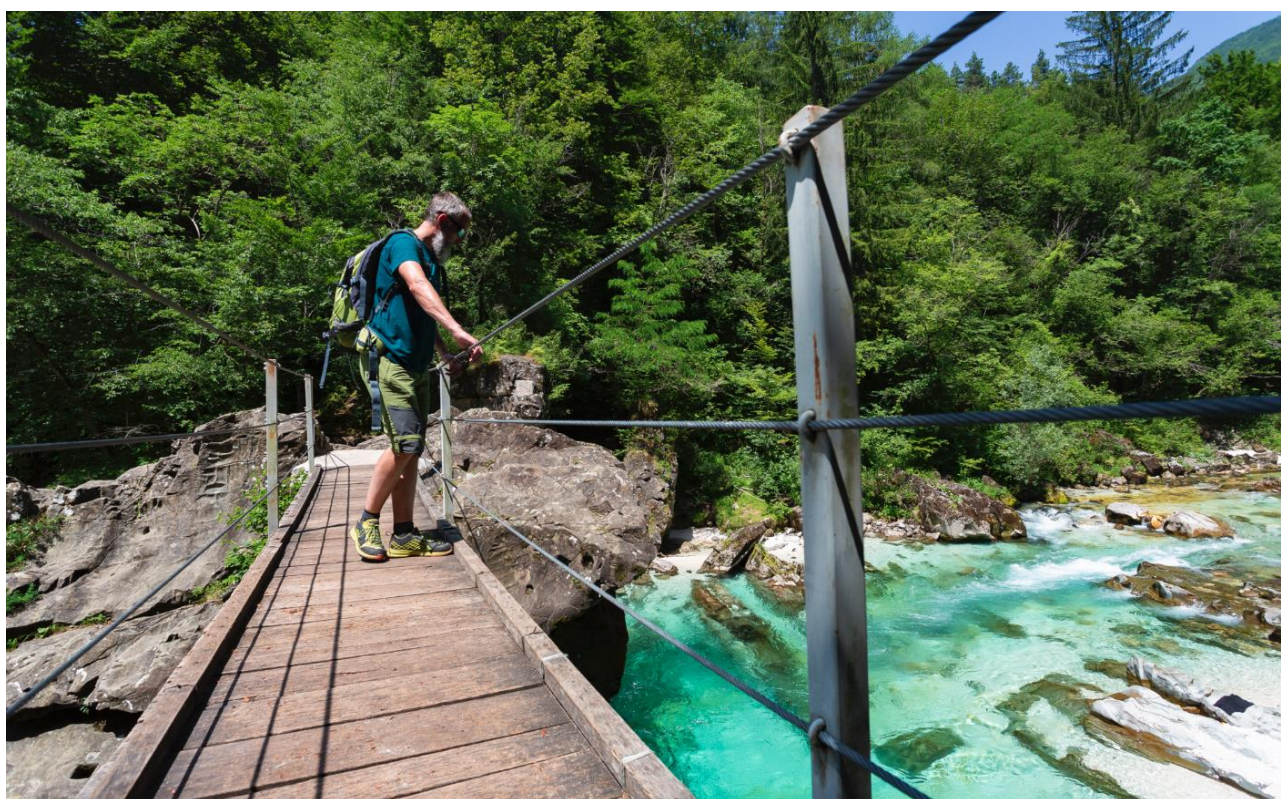
Among the novelties that Walk of Peace brings there are three new cross-border connections: to the north there is the connection between Kobarid and Cividale: it is a circular path along 100 kilometers divided into 6 sections where each section can be covered in a day. Then there is the circular path that connects Gorizia (Gorica), and Nova Gorica and finally, to the south, there is the connection between Mount Ermada (Grmada), the central peak that connects the Italian and Slovenian Karst. All three links highlight the heritage of the First World War.

Along the entire Walk of Peace there are still numerous testimonies of this type. Walk of Peace has come to life on an area that was once separated from the front and has become one of the most important stories that help to create a common space, a common Alps-Adriatic region between Slovenia, Italy and Austria. In addition to the central route along the Isonzo Front, partners and territories in the surrounding area are also included in Walk of Peace. Thus among the points of interest there is the historical heritage in the whole Friuli Venezia Giulia Region including Carnia, the Julian Alps and the whole hilly part especially around the Municipality of Ragogna which will be connected to the Walk of Peace and which in turn will connect and the Province of Venice through the paths that already exist along the Tagliamento river. In Slovenia the route also includes the Gorenjska region with Kranjska Gora and Bohinj and the Notranjsko-Primorska region with Logatec and Pivka.





Walk of Peace is an international heritage, and is an example of connection between the peoples of Europe, strengthening dialogue, knowledge and mutual respect. These are values, of which Europe and the world today have an indispensable need: peace is the most precious good of humanity and the Walk of Peace project initiative bears its name.



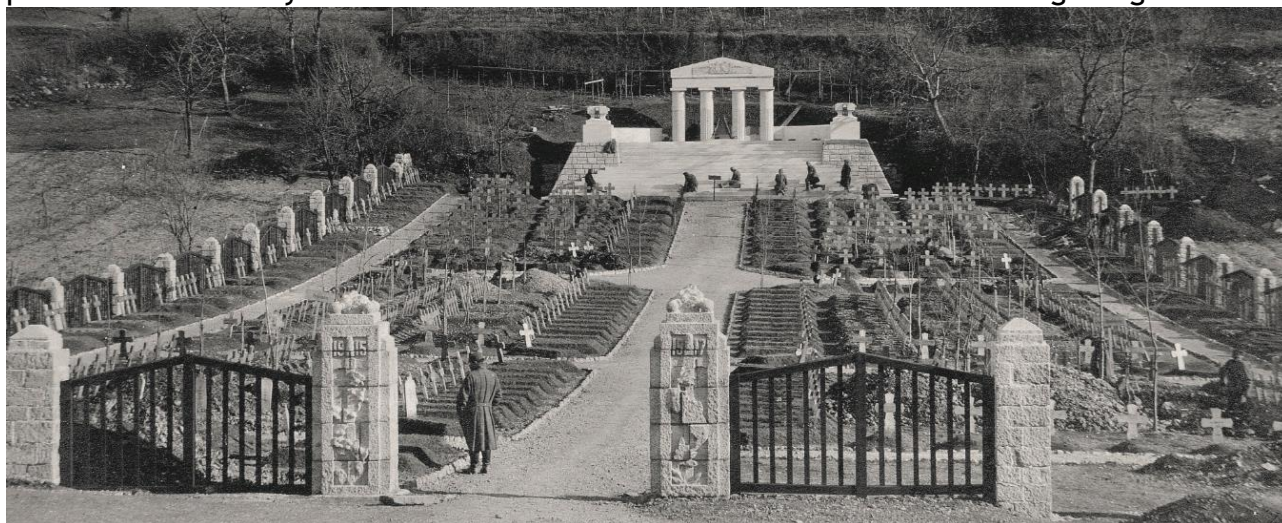


Fundacija Poti miru v Posočju - ZRC SAZU

Census of buried in Austro-Hungarian military cemeteries on the territory of the Isonzo front

The Isonzo front (1915–1917) with 11 Italian and one Austrian-German offensive resulted in 1.5 million military losses (killed, wounded, prisoners, disappeared) on both sides. According to estimates so far implemented the fatalities were at least 250,000, which would mean an average of 297 soldiers killed per day.

Austro-Hungarian and Italian soldiers were buried in civilian, but mainly military cemeteries, which after the war were subject to relocation, reunification or even abandonment, more or less a third of the approximately 200 military cemeteries are preserved and today entered in the Slovenian Permanent Cultural Heritage Register.



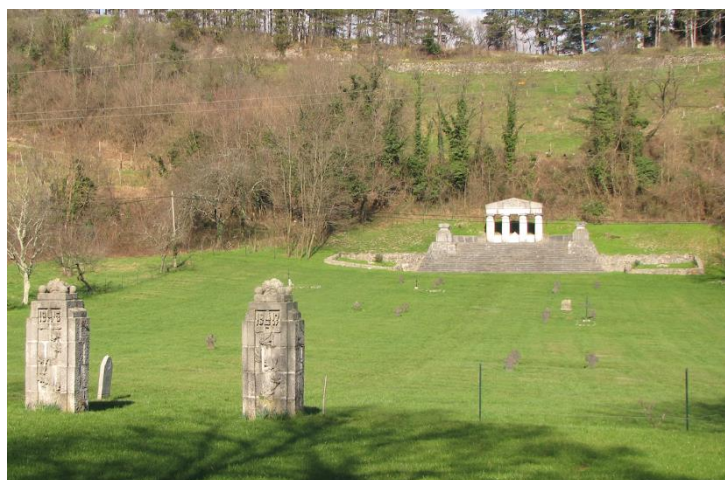


The mortal remains of Italian soldiers in the 1930s were exhumed from military cemeteries and moved to three charnel houses in Soča Valley - in Oslavia in Gorizia, above Kobarid and in Redipuglia. About 1000 soldiers' remains are buried in the German ossuary in Tolmin.

The Walks of Peace in the Soča Region Foundation and the Tolmin museum have so far compiled a repertoire of soldiers buried in military cemeteries from Rombon to the Kal and Lom plateau and Italian soldiers buried in the charnel house in Kobarid (<http://www.potmiru.si/ita/evidenca-padlih/>). Still incomplete data on Slovenian soldiers who died in the First World War can be found on the SISTORY website (<https://zv1.sistory.si/?lang=en>).

The WALKofPEACE project has set as one of its objectives the realization of a data collection on fallen soldiers buried in Austro-Hungarian military cemeteries from the Banjška planota plateau to the Karst. This part of the project is based on extensive archive work, especially in the Österreichisches Staatsarchiv - Kriegsarchiv (Austrian State Archive - Military Archive), which preserves voluminous material on the military cemeteries of the former Austria-Hungary (AT-OeStA/KA VL KGräber Kriegsgräber (KGräber) Erster Weltkrieg, 1914). During the war the cemeteries were accurately documented, their destinies after the war were different.

The material contains the cadastre of burials, lists of data (lists of individual and general burials) and, in cases where the Italian authorities in the post-war





period transferred the remains, also the list of buried soldiers newly drawn up by the Central Office for the Care and Honours to the corpses of those who died in the war (COSCG). The items that make up the lists are the name and surname of the soldier, the rank and unit to which he belongs, the place of burial / cemetery, row and number of the tomb, sometimes, in the Austrian lists, also the data of birth and place of residence. There are handwritten data in the Austrian lists, by different means, so they are more or less preserved and readable, while the Italian lists are typed, but the annotation of personal data is not always very precise.

In the first phase of this part of the project, most of the material has already been photographed or scanned. In the second phase the group will transcribe the selected Italian lists of representative cemeteries, which will be compared with the original Austrian lists and completed with data from other sources, which already exceeds the scope of the project both in terms of content and time. In parallel, a web tool will also be prepared, with the help of which the data will become publicly available in the medium term, but only after their accuracy established and confirmed, which also extends beyond the tasks of the project and will be the long-term task for "Walks of Peace in the Soča Region Foundation

Summary

The First World War, which took place in the years 1915-1917 in the territory of the Upper Soča and Karst, left behind destroyed places and a devastated land and took the lives of numerous soldiers, whose remains rest in about 60 military cemeteries along the then front. Numerous events in the 20th century contributed to the fact that the names of fallen soldiers were never systematically studied, elaborated and presented to the public. That is why one of the objectives of the "WALK of PEACE" project is to collect, process and present to the public data on military cemeteries from the First World War.



VeGAL

MUB: Water Stories, War Stories



The relationship between man, water and earth is the common thread of the history of the Lower Piave Valley, and finds its material identity in the collections of MUB - Museo della Bonifica. From antiquity, with the first settlements on hills, to the medieval period of castles and monasteries along the river courses, to the hydraulic interventions of the Serenissima

and the traffic of the latter on the Adriatic, up to the great reclamation work and the Great War, water, in the form of marshes, rivers, sea and canals, has always been a challenge to human ingenuity.

In this sense, the reclamation work is not only a defined historical period in which the epic of the first pioneers of the nineteenth century and the birth of the Consortia is generally framed, but rather it becomes the very way of living and thinking of the territory through history to the contemporary dimension, to allow human and economic development and relations for the life of the communities, while ensuring hydraulic safety.

The resulting profusion of ingenuity, courage and work to achieve this goal has not only created a new type of landscape on an Italian level (also from a naturalistic, aesthetic and cultural point of view), but has also made the reclaimed territories a model of transformation on an international level, already between the end of the 19th century



and the beginning of the 20th century. The Lower Piave Valley is one of these examples, already considered at the beginning of the twentieth century "the Netherlands of Veneto" and the object of visits by international delegations between Austria, Germany, Hungary, etc. The systematic action of reclamation, which had its beginnings in these lands through the Roman centuriation and then lost its incisiveness in the following centuries, suffered an abrupt setback with the Great War, a period in which the waterworks were destroyed by the Italian army itself, in order to flood the territories hindering the enemy advance. This led to a return to the original amphibious nature of the territory with the swamps and the recrudescence of malaria.

Water, not only with the Piave became the last Italian bulwark, but also in the form of swamps and flooding was a functional strategy for war operations. The destruction of the waterworks, the return of malaria, together with the harsh and rainy winter of 1917, were further elements of an articulated complexity both in the mobility of the armies and in the events of the refugees on occupied land.

What happened in the Lower Piave Valley during the First World War, in particular between the end of October 1917 and the first days of November 1918, was a practically unique situation among all the fronts involved in the conflict. These territories, in fact, allowed, for their conformation, to implement an exclusive strategy, namely the flooding of large areas of land through the destruction of waterways and the breaking of embankments that guaranteed the drying up of the land.





Waterways and canals, the result of years of reclamation work to make previously flooded, swampy or marshy areas cultivable, became means of defence against the enemy.

The reclamation system was therefore thwarted in the first Italian attempt to protect the retreat, flooding the territories to prevent the Austrian advance, and then by the Austrians themselves to slow down the Italian counter-offensive.

This was what happened in about a year, from the defeat of Caporetto to the Italian victory at the end of the battle of Vittorio Veneto on 4 November 1918.

History of water, men, facts, experiences, that between flooding, strategic destruction of plants, embankments, bridges, boats and movements along rivers and canals, movements of troops and civilians in the hinterland, hospitals in the rear, is still little known, silent and indefinite as the swamp that in part, during those dramatic events, returned to submerge these lands.

It is, however, a very strong specificity, which in this area fundamentally differentiated the Great War, compared to the nearby Grappa and Montello, although they were united by the Piave River; a peculiarity that not only shaped the events and places during the conflict, but the very history of the people who, soldiers or civilians, on both sides, lived the experience of that dramatic event.

Landscapes at war, forever transformed, to which was given a sort of symbolic sacredness linked to the places of sacrifice; an invisible story, of which we find few tangible signs on the territory, which can be made visible to all, through the recovery of the specific stories in the story, through a story that in the new planning of the MUB takes shape.

The exhibition and installation project dedicated to the theme of the Great War and Reclamation is therefore part of a wider context, in a story that starts from ancient times and goes back to the first half of the 20th century, with food for thought on the Great War also from different and less known perspectives: the return of malaria, which claimed victims both among soldiers and civilians, the role of the reclaimers engaged in special actions according to the strategic flooding, the changing landscape: from an ordered and



vertical dimension to a horizontal dimension of the swamp.

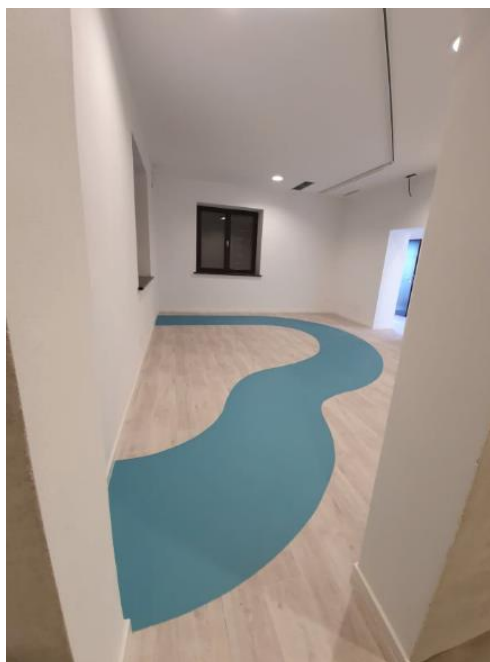
If the reclamation had represented, as the Roman centuriation had already represented a return to order, also visually translated into clear geometries, the Great War cancelled this image, superimposing a chaotic disorder, between curved lines of new ponds and tears in the earth.

Thanks to multimedia and new digital languages it will be possible to make visible what is invisible for us today. Through sounds, voices, images, stories and tales will come to life, giving back a memory that, due to the very nature of the territory, amphibious in fact, is only apparently erased, but that the MUB, drawing its vocation from water, will be able to enhance, preserve and make immortal.



Mestna občina Nova Gorica

Municipality of Nova Gorica concludes the first phase of restructuring the visitors center on sabotin



At the junction between two countries, between the sea and the Alps, in the embrace of Soča River, rises a small mountain with a wide biodiversity, but with a dark past. Even if today nature surrounds the mountain Sabotin with life, in the past the same land was sprinkled with blood. After the days of bursts, noise and fury can be shown in the priceless beauty of nature. The contrast that symbolizes Sabotin, leads to his mission to be a space of memory and a symbol of peace. It contains historical-cultural and naturalistic monuments that carry messages about the absurdity of wars and the precious perception of peace.

The visitor centre on the mountain Sabotin will take place in one of the two buildings, once used for military purposes (border guard turrets). The aim is to place an innovative multimedia centre with a museum collection, whose attractions will define Sabotin as a landmark on the Walk of Peace from the Alps to the Adriatic, presenting visitors with the history of the Isonzo Front and the naturalistic monuments of Sabotin.



In order to locate the visitor centre, the Municipality of Nova Gorica had to first rebuild the building, once a watchtower on Sabotin. The municipality received the building free of charge from the Ministry of Defense of the Republic of Slovenia, pursuing a single objective, namely to present the heritage of the First World War and Sabotin. The activities consist of carrying out construction and craft work, thanks to which the building will become suitable and functional for the opening of the visitors' centre.

The first phase was a complete reconstruction of the old, worn-out building. In addition to the reconstruction of the roof, the works included the restoration of the walls, the floor slabs representing the Soča River, the new electro installations and the mechanical installations. The cost of the reconstruction work amounted to EUR 150,000, of which EUR 90,700 was obtained as part of the Walk of Peace WALKofPEACE project. The building is considered ready for the opening of a modern and interactive visitor centre, with the function of presenting the vast heritage of the First World War and Sabotin in an innovative and inviting way. In addition, the rich flora and fauna of the Sabotin protected area will be presented for the first time, which will have the opportunity to influence an even more interesting project. In accordance with the dynamics of the Walk of Peace project, the Municipality of Nova Gorica will soon begin the implementation of the second phase, i.e. the arrangement of the visitor centre. The presentation of a cultural-historical heritage and numerous naturalistic attractions will be interpreted on various levels, ranging from the more general, frequently known, to the less known and more specific information. Together with the main theme, there is also a hint of the next theme, arousing interest and creating links between them.





The scenario of the visit coincides with the classic dramatic triangle, starting with the beginning of the First World War, intensifying the facts towards the beginning of the Isonzo Front, until the role of Sabotino. The peak is reached with the personal stories of the soldiers in the cafés, follows the epilogue with the end of the war, resolving with the entry into the theme of the natural beauty of the mountain and offering a reflection on the meaning of peace



Comune di Ragogna



The project activities of the Municipality of Ragogna (PP10) were reformed after prior coordination with the Lead Partner and after the approval of the change by the Managing Authority. Accordingly, the chrono programme for the implementation of WALKofPEACE project activities was also updated.

In accordance with legal procedures, a contractor was selected to plan and carry out the work at the

Great War Museum, where reorganization, maintenance, replacement of the light fixture and installation of the air conditioner are planned. This activity required significant energy and time costs due to bureaucratically complicated procedures. The implementation plan has been realized so that construction can continue in the next period. A representative of the Municipality of Ragogna participated in the meetings and conferences organized within the project. He met at a meeting of partners, which took place on January 21 in the Park of Military History in Pivka in Slovenia. In order to ensure the effectiveness of the project, the Municipality of Ragogna was in constant contact with the leading partner, and at all times it also pays attention to the procedural correctness of the implementation of activities.





PROJECT

The project "WALKofPEACE" concerns the enhancement of the heritage of the First World War between the Alps and the Adriatic. It is co-financed by the Interreg Italy-Slovenia Programme 2014-2020 (ERDF), Italian national funds and Slovenian private funds. It has a duration of 36 months and will end at the end of 2021.

With the project "WALKofPEACE" aims to protect and promote this heritage, through shared cross-border activities, aimed at implementing its use, also through a rich carnet of cultural events for history lovers.

A Walk of Peace (Path of Peace) brand will be proposed, to strengthen the identity of this particular tourist product and to promote its promotion and marketing

There will also be an important work of museum restyling, the renovation of exhibition spaces, new installations including multimedia and the creation of new thematic paths and info-points.

<https://www.ita-slo.eu/it/walkofpeace>