



## INT-HERIT

IMPLEMENTATION NETWORK OF HERITAGE STRATEGIES IN SMALL  
AND MEDIUM- SIZED EUROPEAN CITIES

# PEER REVIEW REPORT



**Sigulda Castle Complex**

# 1. Peer Review Methodology

Within the frames of INT-HERIT project there will be organized Peer Reviews aiming to review the site visits performed during the transnational meetings. Outputs and conclusions will be derived to present in benchmarking format the Peer Reviews and will help all partners to learn with each other. It will result in useful recommendations that will act as inputs for the project deliverables.

## 1.1. The Peer Review Process

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Peer review is the evaluation of a task, a project, a policy by one or more people of similar competence to the producers of the task/project/policy (peers). It constitutes a form of self-regulation and self-assessment by qualified members of a profession within the relevant field. Peer review approaches are employed to maintain standards of quality, improve performance, and provide credibility.

The European Union has been using peer review in the 'Open Method of Co-ordination' of policies in the fields of active labour market policy since 1999. A peer review is a process where dedicated representatives exchange information and experiences on a specific topic for an effective policy or practice. The Peer Review process comprises a range of presentations and interactive working groups there are included visits to local sites where the policy can be seen in operation.

## 1.2. Peer Review Implementation

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- Peer review will be organized after each site visit in all transnational meetings;
- An open innovation approach will be followed in the peer review process. That means peers as well as interviewers (host city) are put together in round tables to review the site:
- A good preparation of the “host city representative” taking part in the review is essential to ensure an effective and fruitful peer review;

- The LG should be invited for the peer review;
- Presentation about the site to kick the peer review session (in attachment);
- Site visit - Visit of the peer-review targets;
- The peer review comments that goes to the Canvas tool are based on the group discussion;
- Some lessons learnt from previous peer review sessions have been taken into account:
  - make sure that partner members do not 'stick' together
  - give more data in order to frame the discussion
  - present a clear view on the scope and required deliverables to ensure a focused discussion
  - ensure that more representatives of the hosting city do participate
- 3 tables were organized:
  - 3 city partners + host city representative + other (ex: local experts)
  - 3 city partners + host city representative + other (ex: local experts)
  - 2 city partners + host city representative + other (ex: local experts)
- The participants were free to select the group to join, however, in each group no more than one representative of a city should participate
- The peer review session should have a minimum duration of 1 hour and 15 minutes;
- In the end of the session, the host city representative makes a 5 minutes presentation about the work developed in each table;

## 2. The Site – Sigulda Castle Complex

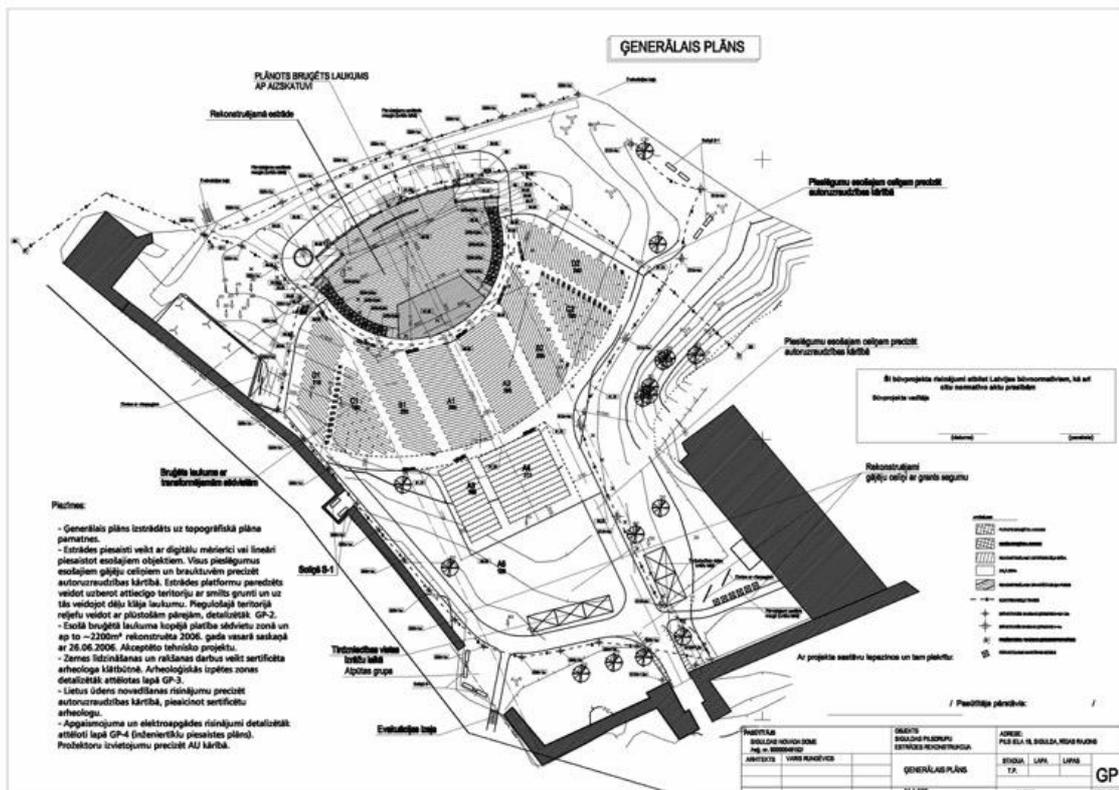
Partner	Castle Complex
 <p><b>Municipality of Sigulda</b></p> <p><a href="http://www.sigulda.lv">www.sigulda.lv</a></p>	<p>The main focus of the Development Strategy of Sigulda Castle Complex 2013-2018 is on involvement of members of creative industries in the Sigulda Castle Complex through seeking the best scenarios and providing the most effective solutions in order to turn the Castle Complex into the creative quarter and place where creative entrepreneurships can successfully develop. To turn the area, which was considered degraded, into opened city space for a healthy lifestyle, which provides an opportunity both for the locals and the guests for recreation, education and work in a healthy and inspirational environment.</p> <p>The three main objectives are the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ development of the centre of creative activities for both the locals and the guests (interaction between local inhabitants, entrepreneurs, guests, ensuring openness, education, social responsibility and development);</li> </ul> <p>integration of the Sigulda Castle Complex into tourism routs (a focused orientation inwards the planning process of tourism routs; development of tourism offers specific to various target groups);</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Creation of environment for entrepreneurship and representation (to turn the Sigulda Castle Complex into a place where educational, private and corporative events and presentations can be held, where entrepreneurial activities can be developed).</li> </ul>

<p><b>3 Areas were identified for the peer-review</b></p>	<p><b>Budget and Agreements</b></p> <p>The total budget for the action is about 10 000 000 EUR.</p> <p>For the maintenance and development of the Sigulda Castle Complex about 2.5 million EUR have been attracted from 2009-2017. The main investment object was the Medieval Castle; works were finished in the end of 2012 (about 1.2 million EUR local budget + ERDF). The other large investment solely done by Sigulda District Council was reconstruction of one of the manor buildings, the so called Stable (about 800,000 EUR). The works were completed in March 2016, and currently the premises are rented out to the local creative entrepreneurs.</p> <p>In 2017 Sigulda District Council signed agreement for reconstruction and revitalization of Sigulda Castle Complex for support of entrepreneurship – the project covers restoration of three buildings and large part of the territory, and the works are planned to be finished by the end of 2018. The total budget is about 5.5 million EUR (with ERDA contribution almost 3.1 million EUR).</p> <p>Also Sigulda New Castle will be reconstructed and large restauration works will be carried out through several means of financing (one of the two necessary investment agreements are concluded) – these are planned to be completed by the end of 2019. The total budget is estimated almost 5 million EUR.</p>

## 3. Peer Review Session

The peer review session was organized with 3 following working groups:

- **Group 1: THEME FOR THE FESTIVAL**
- Inputs for discussion:
  - WHAT WOULD BE THE TARGET AUDIENCE OF THE FESTIVAL?
  - WHICH WOULD BE THE BEST TIMING FOR THE FESTIVAL?
  - HOW THE FESTIVAL DOES CORRESPONDS TO SIGULDA CASTLE COMPLEX STRATEGY?



General Plan of Festival venue inside the castle complex

- **Group 2: BUNKER**

- Inputs for discussion:

- HOW TO USE THE BUNKER (166 m2) ALONG THE SIGULDA CASTLE COMPLEX STRATEGY?
- WHAT WOULD BE THE STORY TELLING OF THIS MILITARY OBJECT? SHOULD THERE BE ONE?
- HOW DOES IT CORRESPOND TO THE HISTORAL BOBLSEIGH ROUTE OR NATURE CONSERVATION AGENCY THAT ARE LOCATED NEARBY?



Location of the bunker and historical bobsleigh

▪ **Group 3: PEOPLE'S PARK**

▪ Inputs for discussion:

- TO GOLF OR NOT TO GOLF?
- HOW TO ATTRACT INVESTMENTS AND KEEP THE GREEN AREA NOT INCREASING CITY'S EXPENDITURES?
- WOULD THIS INVESTMENT FIT WITH SIGULDA CASTLE COMPLEX STRATEGY?



Area for eventual golf course

## 4. Main Findings

The Main Findings intends to highlight the strong ideas developed during the peer review activity and should be used as a working document for the city local group. The findings are based on the outputs of each table explaining its purposes and possible impacts.

### 1. The Festival

In the case of the “Theme of the Festival” the group discussion led to the creation of three groups of proposals: When/Why to organise the festival?; How to set it up?; What thematic? The mains findings are summarized next:

When/Why?

- **Sigulda = “just outside Riga”**: no doubt, the proximity to Riga and good connections both by road or railway is key aspect to attract people to a major festival. In one hour people can go from Riga airport to Sigulda Festival venue.
- **Between two festivals** (POSITIVUS and SUMMER SOUND): maybe the best time to organise the festival is between those renowned festivals, one taking place in Latvia by the seaside (POSITIVUS) and the other in Helsinki (SUMMER SOUND); to differentiate from these the Festival in Sigulda should focus on its particular location (green/ mountains/ sports) in opposition to a seaside location and city environment of the other two. The idea is to connect Sigulda Festival to these other festivals and attract some of the crowd there to take a one week vacation where they can watch 2 festivals. A clever strategy to increase the level of attractiveness of the festival.

Check [positivusfestival.com](http://positivusfestival.com) | [www.summersound.lv](http://www.summersound.lv)

- **What is in it for Sigulda? Brand promotion & economic development.** The organisation of a festival has of course impacts in the local economy but the temporary nature of events makes a sort of a bubble that soon disappear. More important are the stronger

impacts in brand creation, i.e. the promotion of the city visibility that such an event can produce. A good festival could definitely put the city on the map, sort of say, and will bring more visitors for the city through brand promotion of city associated with the festival. This is the case of the town Salacgriva and its SUMMER SOUND festival ([www.summersound.lv](http://www.summersound.lv)).

How?

- **Make it good and give time to grow:** don't go straight to a big event, start small but make it very good and then let it growth in time. It takes time to build a reputation so don't expect to have results of the first or second year. The plan should cover 3-5 years in order to really measure results.
- **Franchise it or not?** There are some interesting examples in Europe of very successful festivals that are replicas of other bigger festivals. The main advantage is to use a brand already established in the market. An example is the case of the famous "Primavera Sound" festival taken place in Barcelona (Spain) every year that now has a second version in Porto (Portugal); this has lower budget, not so well known musicians on the set but it keeps attracting crowds from abroad as people already the concept from Barcelona. It just a different location which is a plus for visitors.
- **Spread costs -> 2 or 3 days festival:** people may be attracted for a 2- 3 days festival to spread their costs; campground in Peoples' Park is another possibility yo keep the costs down;
- **One or multiple stages** (22 hectares/max 5 000 people stage): the limitation of seats inside the castle (max. 5000 people) is of course a limitation to the festival growth. One solution could be the creation of multiple stages across the area of the castle complex to allow simultaneous concerts. The wide area of the complex allows the creation of different listening environments without interfering with each other.

What?

- **Theme oriented/** - (ex.: nature, climate etc.): the group suggested that the festival should be theme oriented in order to integrate the overall strategy of the city, namely pointing to the city main assets, nature and culture, maybe connecting it to as nature protection or climate change mitigation.
- **Day - family; night – crazy:** the idea behind it is to attract both young people and families in order to target different segments of the market; during the day the concept of the festival is more family-oriented while later at night it becomes a more ‘crazy’ atmosphere targeting particularly young people.
- **Specific musical area?** This aspect raised a lot of discussion. Some think that associating the festival to a specific musical area could be beneficial, namely attracting the lovers of that musical scene; others prefer a wide selection of genres. The case of electronic music is quite successful. For example Tomorrowland (Belgium) or Untold (Romania) are festivals capable of attracting more than 300,000 people. Some are organised in remote areas and still able to attract the crowds such as the Boom Festival (Portugal). However this may not be the right selection for the site and the city strategy. A difficult choice indeed as it depends of the objectives set by the municipality and what type of impacts is expecting.

See more in [untold.com](http://untold.com) | [www.tomorrowland.com](http://www.tomorrowland.com) | [www.boomfestival.org](http://www.boomfestival.org)

- **Only music?** Food trucks, open air movies, art performances are important complements to the music itself and provides the relax environment that will bring other segments to the event. The ‘Beautiful Days’ festival, a three-day festival held close to Devon (UK), is a good example of this type of festival. The festival which has no corporate sponsorship or branding was pronounced "Best Family Festival" by the UK Festival Awards. With a capacity of 17,500 seats (all sell out in advance) it can be a good example to follow by Sigulda.

See more in [www.beautifuldays.org](http://www.beautifuldays.org)

## 2. The Bunker

In the case of the WWII 'Bunker' the main goal was to develop ideas for the use of the site; many ideas were presented and discussed briefly; the main outputs are presented next:

### Most importantly:

- Keep "Bunker" in the name
- Keep the doors
- Keep it and show as it is now

Overall the group proposed to keep the bunker as it is now on the outside but create a new programme to valorise its 'insides'. The following uses were proposed.

### Possible uses:

- **'Visit the Bunker bats'** – Create a tour visit to watch bats in their natural environment;
- **'The Bunker Food Stall'** – a place to stock and sell food and beverages such as cheese, butter, wine, cider; offers snacks on the way to the castle complex;
- **'The Bunker Bar'** – a thematic bar displaying the history of the place;
- **'The Bunker Wine cellar'** – a cellar to store and show to visitors local production of wines;
- **'The Bunker Mushroom'** – Mushroom production start-up taking advantage of the bunker interior.
- **'The Bunker Team'** – Team building place targeting school children and companies staff;
- **'What happens in the Bunker stays in the Bunker'** – a children playground joking with the famous sentence use for Las Vegas;
- **'Escape the Bunker'** – An Escape game connecting with the history of the site;

### Other possible choices (if feasible):

- Create a SPA
- Place for bands to play
- Radio station; recording station 'Bunker Studio'
- Cine club;
- Make an 'Airbnb';
- Station to look at the 'stars' by opening the ceiling (glass ceiling)



## 2. The People's Park

For the People's Park the challenge was to propose ideas other than the planned golf course; the main outputs are presented next:

### To golf or not to golf?

'That was the question' Hamlet would say. The discussion about the pros and cons of investing on golf courses is recurrent when talking about tourism development. The arguments are well known. Golf attracts in general wealthy people that spend a lot more than the ordinary tourist. Usually it requires building also a hotel offer of the same level.

The direct economic impact of stays and golf fees is important but more important is the capacity of the golf tourism strategy to fight the seasonality problem. In fact, in many highly touristic areas where almost all the buzz is concentrated in a 2-3 month period, golf plays an important role to extend the high season up to November, as players can still enjoy the game even if it is too cold to hit the beach. However this comes always with a cost, namely a strong environmental impact (ex: water, original landscape, etc).

Another aspect is the risk of losing the identity of the place. A golf course doesn't seem to match the spirit of this cultural heritage site and may prevent to fully develop the envisaged strategy of castle complex project.

Therefore the group developed an alternative strategy hoping this could be helpful for the municipality planners.

### Alternative strategies:

**Focus on family & child** – promoting the use of the park among families and children is more connected with the overall strategy for the castle complex; it not only will engage citizens in nature and sport activities but can also provide a complementary offer to the castle itself. It could be integrated in the tour of the castle and offer more than just a 'cultural visit' becoming more an 'experiments' site.

- **You don't need big investors** — small investments in the park can produce important changes on its use.
- **Events space** – building low cost temporary structures can promote the organisation of events in the place;
- **Outdoor fitness** – again, the investment in outdoor fitness gear is not too high and will promote the use of the park among citizens of all ages;
- **Outdoor furniture** – minimum outdoor furniture will allow other activities in the park (ex. Barbecue; playground furniture; tree houses)
- **Festival campground** – part of the park could be used as campground during the festival; again a temporary use;
- **Olympic theme** – the park programme can evolve from the Olympic theme, promoting the place as a sports park and complement the city strategy of developing winter sports facilities (as the modern bobsleigh). Examples are a tree trampoline, adventurous playground, radical sports, etc.
- **Wood Cabins** – light wood cabins could support land art outdoor exhibitions, workshops and use the handcraft start-ups experience for new entrepreneurs.
- **Health tourism** – nature is an important theme in Sigulda and could be exploited, namely by creating a “Connect to nature” programme with forest therapy, nature education, etc.

Elaborated by the INT-HERIT LE

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