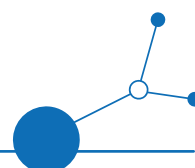
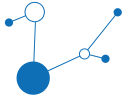


## D.2.4.4. Conceptual Solution Documents

for advance, intermediate and  
initial territory





## A. Introduction

*“Grenzen sind die Narben der Geschichte. Man darf diese nicht vergessen. Aber man braucht sie auch nicht zu kultivieren. Das Gemeinsame des Gebietes, beiderseits der Grenze, ist wertvoller und bedeutsamer als das Trennende”.*

“Borders are the scars of history. One should not forget them. But one should not cultivate them either. That what unites a territory on both sides of the border is more valuable and more significant than what separates”.

Alfred Mozer – 1973

### From pilot insights to transferable governance

This report presents three conceptual solution documents developed within the GOV4PeaCE framework to support territories managing First World War heritage at different stages of (cross-border) governance maturity. Rather than reproducing the three pilot experiences mechanically, this report translates their findings into transferable governance approaches that can be adapted, replicated and scaled up in other territorial contexts.

The three conceptual documents reflect the diverse governance conditions observed during the project, with each stage of maturity implying a distinct set of strategic governance priorities. In the application form, these stages are both referred to as **advanced/mature, intermediate/developing** and **initial** territories. In this report, they are discussed as **mature, developing** and **initial maturity territories** in order to emphasise their governance logic more clearly.

- **Initial Stage – From Fragmentation to Recognition** // This stage concerns territories where First World War heritage exists but remains weakly institutionalised, weakly coordinated and insufficiently connected to wider territorial development. At this level, the primary challenge is not the absence of heritage, but the absence of a coherent governance field. The strategic priority is therefore to create a first recognised coordination basis, make the heritage field more visible and establish an initial anchor for future cooperation.
- **Developing Stage – From Recognition to Coordination** // This stage concerns territories where heritage relevance is already visible and cooperation is beginning to emerge, but where governance remains only partly structured. These territories typically contain recognisable assets, motivated actors and some institutional initiatives, yet still lack durable coordination, common standards and sufficient continuity. The strategic priority is therefore to connect dispersed sites, actors and narratives through a territorial framework supported by light but durable coordination.
- **Mature Stage – From Coordination to Formalised Governance** // This stage concerns territories where heritage visibility, institutional density and cooperation experience are already strong, but where governance still requires stronger alignment in order to function as a coherent cross-border



system. In these territories, the challenge is no longer to create first recognition or first coordination, but to align existing routes, institutions, standards and governance arrangements more formally and more durably. The strategic priority is therefore to strengthen multilateral coordination, shared standards and institutional alignment across already established systems.

Taken together, the three conceptual solution documents aim to turn pilot experience into practical governance tools for other regions. Their purpose is to help public authorities, museums, heritage organisations, destination managers, researchers and civil-society actors assess their own governance reality and identify the institutional steps needed to strengthen it. In this sense, the report is not only analytical but also operational as it offers a structured basis for uptake in territories beyond the original pilot areas, whether they are at an initial, developing or mature stage.

Although the three conceptual solution documents can be read separately, this introductory section provides the common framework needed to understand their logic, terminology and intended use. Additional conceptual clarification on governance and related terms is provided in **Annex 1**, which serves as a supporting conceptual and terminological background to the three maturity-specific documents.

## Work package 2 piloting context

Between November 2024 and April 2026 our time was dedicated to the piloting of the World War I governance model in functional territories of different maturity levels. This phase formed a crucial bridge between the conceptual groundwork of the project and the development of the maturity-specific conceptual solutions presented in this report. Its purpose was not only to apply the governance model in practice, but also to test its assumptions, assess its relevance in different territorial conditions and refine it on the basis of pilot evidence. The objective of WP2 and its piloting activities is two-fold

- (1) to determine the extent to which multidimensional and cross-territorial heritage governance is acceptable to stakeholders
- (2) to investigate whether the proposed integrated approach and common governance tools can effectively trigger sustainable socioeconomic development in remote and declining areas.

In line with these objectives, the piloting phase was also designed to validate a number of hypotheses. We hypothesized that a cross-territorial governance model would be more effective than fragmented local approaches, that shared tools and practices would facilitate cooperation across border and sectors and lastly, that by strengthening governance capacity, functional territories could better unlock their cultural heritage for sustainable socio-economic development.

To achieve these objectives, three functional territories have been selected as pilot areas. In these territories, the governance model was tested and refined based on insights and findings generated through the pilot projects. The three functional territories with different maturity levels where the piloting took place are :

- North-Eastern Italy and Western Slovenia (*mature functional territory*)
- South-Eastern Poland and North-Eastern Slovakia (*developing functional territory*)



- Southern Hungary (*initial functional territory*)

All these territories share many common features, but the most important characteristic is that each consists of border regions<sup>1</sup> with a direct link to the history and memory of First World War. Although these territories differ in institutional capacity, territorial coherence and levels of heritage activation, they also share an important common characteristic: each consists of border regions directly linked to the history and memory of the First World War. This combination of shared historical reference points and differing maturity conditions made them particularly suitable as comparative testing environments and, ultimately, as the basis for the three conceptual solution documents developed in this report.

## Methodological note

The report is based on GOV4PeaCE project documentation and on evidence drawn from the three pilot territories associated with different levels of governance maturity:

- Hungary as an **initial functional territory**
- Poland–Slovakia as a **developing functional territory**
- Italy–Slovenia as a **mature functional territory**

The project-developed CEWoP model underlying the pilots is not conceived as a rigid standard. It is explicitly designed to be flexible and to accommodate different territorial conditions, levels of institutional capacities and approaches to heritage management.

The three conceptual solution documents are directly grounded in the pilot processes, while moving beyond pilot description towards transferable governance responses. They do not assume that every practice observed in a given pilot belongs exclusively to that maturity stage. Some practices tested in a mature territory may also be relevant in a developing one, while lessons emerging from initial or developing territories may remain valuable for mature systems seeking renewal, simplification or stronger community engagement. The conceptual solution documents should therefore be understood as strategic models for adaptation rather than blueprints for direct copying.

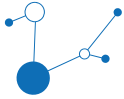
## Guiding principles

Four principles shape the interpretation of the pilots and the formulation of the conceptual solutions.

1. Governance must be understood as **multi-dimensional**. First World War heritage cannot be managed effectively through a single policy lens; it requires alignment between heritage conservation, education, tourism, territorial development, public memory, research and community participation.
2. Governance must be understood as **cross-territorial**. First World War heritage often transcends administrative borders, institutional mandates and sectoral silos. Even where sites are managed locally, their historical significance and development potential frequently extend beyond municipal or regional boundaries.
3. Governance maturity is primarily **institutional** rather than symbolic. A territory is not mature simply because it contains historically important sites. Maturity is expressed through

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<sup>1</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Territorial\\_typologies\\_manual\\_-\\_border\\_regions](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Territorial_typologies_manual_-_border_regions)



recognised coordinating actors, durable cooperation mechanisms, stable responsibilities, shared standards and the capacity to act beyond short project cycles.

4. Transferability depends on **critical adaptation**. Governance solutions can be transferred but never without adjustment. Legal frameworks, ownership patterns, commemorative cultures, administrative competences, landscape conditions and resource levels differ significantly between territories. A robust conceptual solution must therefore identify both what can be transferred and what remains context-specific.

## How to read the conceptual solution documents

The three conceptual solution documents can be read separately, but they are designed to function together. Each document follows the same basic structure and logic. It begins by defining the governance profile of the relevant maturity stage, then offers a critical reading of the corresponding pilot and identifies both the transferable and non-transferable elements. On that basis, it proposes a recommended governance solution together with the conditions for transferability, implementation and progression.

The three documents form a strategic progression: from fragmentation to recognition, from recognition to coordination, and from coordination to formalised multilateral governance. Their shared purpose is to support territories in strengthening the governance of First World War heritage in ways that are both context-sensitive and scalable. Together, they constitute the maturity-specific conceptual solution package foreseen under Deliverable D.2.4.4.



### **Disclaimer**

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