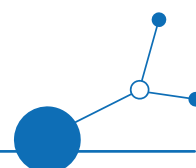


D.2.4.4. Conceptual Solution Documents

Part 2 - Developing maturity territories
Territorial Coordination Solution





Executive summary

The **Territorial Coordination Solution** is designed for territories where First World War heritage is already recognised, local mobilisation has begun and several organisations or initiatives are active, but where governance remains fragmented, uneven and vulnerable to project dependency. Their main challenge is to connect dispersed sites, landscapes, institutions and activities within a coherent territorial framework and to establish coordination arrangements that can continue beyond individual projects.

The solution is directly derived from the Poland–Slovakia pilot and from the project’s reference to a transnational route integrated with museums and other sectors. In the pilot, route mapping, trail development and field-based activities created a practical framework connecting military cemeteries, memorials, battlefield sites, protected landscapes and museum initiatives. The governance model also distributed strategic, operational and local responsibilities, with the Carpathian Euroregion acting as territorial integrator and municipalities, museums, NGOs, national-park bodies and heritage managers contributing to implementation.

The transferable result is not one fixed transnational route or tourism product, but the territorial coordination function created through it: the capacity to define a shared functional territory, connect sites and narratives, distribute responsibilities, establish institutional and interpretation nodes, agree minimum standards and organise recurring cooperation. Museums and other heritage institutions are important nodes within this system, but the wider partnership also includes public authorities, protected-area organisations, research bodies, tourism actors, communities and local custodians.

Implementation begins by defining the functional territory, mapping sites and actors and identifying a credible territorial coordinator. The core partners should then clarify strategic, operational and local roles, identify the principal nodes and establish shared working principles for documentation, interpretation, accessibility, communication, site management and follow-up. Practical joint activities, such as route mapping, field visits, coordinated interpretation or accessibility assessments, put the governance structure into practice and reveal where further coordination is needed.

The solution is most transferable where heritage density and stakeholder mobilisation justify a territorial approach, but where cooperation still lacks continuity, common standards or clear responsibility. Its purpose is to move the territory from isolated initiatives and project-based mobilisation towards a coordinated, legible and durable territorial system, capable of progressing towards stronger multilateral agreements and mature institutional alignment.



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A. Introduction

A.1. Purpose and scope of this document

This document responds to Deliverable D.2.4.4 of the GOV4PeaCE project, which requires three conceptual solution documents resulting from the project pilots. Each document describes a specific governance solution corresponding to a particular maturity stage of a territory – namely **advanced/mature**, **intermediate/developing** and **initial** – with the purpose of enabling further uptake in integrated territorial development. The project application also frames these solutions as practical governance approaches and tools derived from piloting, rather than as descriptive pilot summaries. For the developing stage, the application links the expected solution to the Poland–Slovakia pilot, where a transnational route integrated with museums and other sectors is presented as a potential coordination instrument for territories at an intermediate level of governance maturity.

This document uses the Poland–Slovakia pilot as its primary empirical basis. It also reads that pilot critically in relation to the initial Hungary pilot and the mature Italy–Slovenia pilot in order to distinguish what is specific to the Poland–Slovakia case, what may be transferable, and what would require adaptation in another context. The purpose is not to reproduce the Poland–Slovakia pilot as a fixed template or to assume that route-based cooperation can simply be transferred elsewhere in the same form. Rather, the objective is to translate its lessons into a governance solution for territories where heritage relevance is already visible, local mobilisation has begun and territorial cooperation is emerging, but where governance remains only partly structured and not yet sufficiently stable or integrated.

The intended users of this document are public authorities, regional and local authorities, cross-border organisations, museums, protected-area managers, local associations, tourism actors, researchers, education bodies and heritage managers working in territories where heritage relevance is already visible and cooperation is emerging, but where governance is not yet sufficiently stable, coordinated or formalised.

A.2. Why developing territories require a distinct governance approach

Rather than a simple midpoint between initial and mature stages, developing maturity territories should be understood as a unique and specific governance condition. This status requires a distinct approach that acknowledges their combination of substantial heritage value and partial institutional consolidation. These areas are not blank slates. World War I heritage is already visible, local stakeholder mobilisation has begun and the potential for cooperation is strong enough to justify a networked or territorial approach. At the same time, governance structures often remain only partly formed. Institutional capacity can be uneven and coordination incomplete, meaning these territories still lack the durable structures, shared



standards, and stable routines found in more mature systems. Because long-term cooperation remains fragile and the link between heritage and wider territorial development is not yet fully stabilised, the focus must be on bridging the gap between this visible potential and the formal frameworks needed for lasting stability.

The Poland–Slovakia pilot illustrates this condition particularly clearly. The functional territory includes Polish regions such as Małopolska and Podkarpackie and the north-eastern part of Slovakia, including Poloniny National Park and surrounding municipalities. The area formed part of the Eastern Front and contains a significant concentration of war cemeteries, memorials, battlefield remnants and landscape features. However, the pilot notes limited coordination, fragmented heritage management, weak inter-sectoral integration and reliance on voluntary initiatives, despite growing local interest and emerging cross-border dialogue.

Developing territories can be defined by five main features.

First, they have **visible heritage density** – World War I heritage is already clearly present, recognisable and often spatially or thematically connected through cemeteries, memorials, battlefield remains, museums, landscapes or routes.

Second, they show **partial institutional consolidation** – relevant actors, initiatives or emerging anchor institutions already exist, but they do not yet form a stable, durable or fully coordinated governance system.

Third, they have an **emerging territorial logic** – the heritage field is beginning to be understood beyond isolated sites, through routes, corridors, cross-border connections, landscape systems or site networks.

Fourth, they have **fragile but real cooperation** – stakeholders are beginning to work together, sometimes across borders and sectors, but cooperation often remains project-based, informal, dependent on short-term funding or reliant on individual commitment.

Fifth, they show **uneven activation and limited standardisation** – heritage is already partly connected to tourism, education, local identity or territorial development, but interpretation, documentation, infrastructure, visitor services, guiding capacity and shared standards remain uneven.

These features are derived from observations from the Poland–Slovakia pilot.

Visible heritage density – In the Poland–Slovakia case, this is visible in the concentration of World War I cemeteries, memorials, battlefield remnants and landscape features linked to the Carpathian Front. The territory has sufficient historical relevance and spatial coherence to justify a coordinated territorial approach.

Partial institutional consolidation – The pilot shows emerging institutional anchors and initiatives, including the planned First World War Museum in Gorlice, the Museum Council,



stakeholder workshops and the cooperation agreement between key Polish and Slovak partners. However, these initiatives do not yet amount to a stable governance structure with clear coordination routines.

Emerging territorial logic – Cross-border dialogue, trail prototyping and heritage mapping show that the heritage is increasingly approached as part of a wider functional territory rather than as a set of isolated sites.

Fragile but real cooperation – Cooperation has clearly begun, but remains vulnerable because of fragmented administrative competences, reliance on voluntary stewardship and dependence on short-term projects rather than embedded in systemic partnerships.

Uneven activation and limited standardisation – Heritage activation is emerging through museum planning, trail discussions, interpretation initiatives and stakeholder engagement, but remains uneven due to incomplete inventories, limited professional capacity, weak visitor infrastructure, remote sites and the absence of common standards.

Developing maturity should therefore be understood as a transition condition rather than as a neutral middle stage. It is characterised not simply by having “more” than an initial territory and “less” than a mature one, but by a distinctive combination of visible heritage density, emerging institutions, territorial potential, fragile cooperation and uneven activation. It requires a governance solution that is more structured than foundational coordination, but more flexible and proportionate than advanced institutional alignment. The central task is not to create cooperation from nothing, nor to optimise an already mature system, but to transform emerging cooperation into durable territorial coordination.

B. Analysis of the pilot information and what it reveals

The Poland–Slovakia territory serves as a strong reference case for understanding developing maturity because it exposes the tensions and the central contradiction that define this maturity stage - high heritage relevance does not automatically produce governance capacity.

The pilot confirms that the territory possesses substantial and recognisable World War I heritage - including war cemeteries, memorials, battlefield remnants and wider heritage landscapes linked to the Eastern Front, especially the Carpathian Front. This gives the territory a clear historical and spatial coherence. Combined with a growing stakeholder interest and willingness to cooperate, this creates significant potential for coordinated governance.

At the same time, the pilot information shows that this potential is not yet matched by an equally stable governance structure. The Polish side is described as having low to medium institutional maturity, with dispersed ownership, no dedicated regional institution, limited professional capacity and an emerging museum initiative. The Slovak side remains at a low



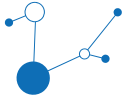
level of institutional maturity, marked by tensions between nature conservation and heritage management, dispersed ownership and minimal professional capacity. The pilot therefore shows that the rich presence of valuable heritage assets does not automatically translate into governance capacity. The territory is not weak because it lacks heritage. It remains vulnerable because it still lacks the structures needed to manage the heritage assets collectively and strategically over the long term. This gap between heritage significance and governance readiness defines the developing stage. It is precisely this gap that the conceptual solution must address.

This also distinguishes the developing stage from the initial maturity condition. In Poland–Slovakia, the challenge is not to make the heritage field visible from scratch. Sites, narratives and actors are already sufficiently present to justify coordinated action. The challenge is rather to translate this existing visibility into a more stable governance framework. At the same time, the territory cannot yet be treated as mature. Its institutions, cooperation routines and standards are not strong enough to sustain advanced governance alignment. The Poland–Slovakia case therefore occupies a transitional position: it has moved beyond basic recognition but it has not yet reached stable and durable coordination.

A first important insight is that the territory is internally differentiated and should not be treated as one homogeneous governance type. A national park, a cemetery cluster, a museum exhibition, a memorial landscape and a municipal heritage site do not generate the same governance requirements. Some sites may already have elements of good governance, such as municipal maintenance, park-level capacity, church or community management, museum-based interpretation or guide services. Yet these elements remain uneven and often locally isolated rather than integrated into a coherent regional or cross-border system.

This internal differentiation is particularly visible where World War I heritage overlaps with landscape and nature conservation. In protected areas such as Poloniny National Park, war cemeteries, battlefield traces and military infrastructure coexist with nature conservation responsibilities, complex ownership situations and access or maintenance constraints. This does not make the Slovak side a separate governance problem but it illustrates a broader issue that is typical of developing territories: heritage governance must work across different site types, land-use regimes and management cultures. A developing solution therefore cannot be purely museum-based, site-based or tourism-based. It must be able to connect institutional nodes, landscapes, cemeteries, municipalities, protected areas and local custodians within one workable territorial framework.

The pilot activities show that such coordination can begin to take shape. Monitoring and evaluation visits, the establishment of the Museum Council in Gorlice, cross-border study visits and workshops, trail prototyping and the cooperation agreement between the City of Gorlice, Poloniny National Park, the Association of the Carpathian Euroregion and Jagiellonian University all demonstrate that cooperation can be activated and partially structured. These



activities are important because they mobilise actors, open cross-border dialogue and begin to translate a dispersed heritage landscape into a shared territorial logic.

Yet these steps should not be overread as proof of a fully consolidated governance system. They demonstrate mobilisation and emerging territorial logic, but they do not yet demonstrate long-term financial security, routine coordination or independence from project funding. This distinction is crucial because developing territories are especially vulnerable to mistaking successful pilot mobilisation for durable institutional consolidation. The cooperation agreement is therefore best understood as a first formal commitment, not yet as evidence of a fully functioning governance architecture. In this sense, the Poland–Slovakia pilot is valuable not because it presents a finished model, but because it reveals the conditions under which developing governance can begin to stabilise.

A second major insight concerns the relationship between institutional anchoring and territorial coordination. The planned First World War Museum in Gorlice and the Museum Council represent important steps towards institutional anchoring. They show how research, education, interpretation and coordination can begin to come together around a visible node. However, the pilot also makes clear that a museum alone cannot carry the whole governance system. The heritage is not concentrated in one site or institution, but dispersed across cemeteries, memorial landscapes, museums, routes, rural areas and cross-border settings. A developing governance model must therefore combine institutional anchoring with a wider territorial coordination framework.

This points to a broader governance requirement: developing territories often need both institutional and territorial coordination. A purely site-based or museum-centred approach is therefore insufficient. At the same time, the territory cannot yet sustain the full complexity of a mature governance architecture. What is needed is a lighter but structured coordination approach that can connect institutions, sites and landscapes without imposing an overly heavy framework. This is the specific governance space occupied by developing maturity: more structured than foundational coordination, but not yet as formalised as mature institutional alignment.

A third insight concerns the specific character of the heritage itself and the role of voluntary stewardship. Much of the Poland–Slovakia heritage is not primarily museum-based, but landscape-based, funerary and dispersed. War cemeteries, remote memorial landscapes, battlefield traces, trenches, military roads and rural sites raise governance questions that differ from those of established museums or visitor-ready heritage attractions. In protected landscapes or complex ownership situations, this can lead to passive protection: heritage may be formally safeguarded, but still remain difficult to access, maintain or interpret. This shows that developing territories require governance tools that work for landscapes, cemeteries and municipal or voluntary management contexts, not only for institutional heritage settings.



Closely connected is the importance of voluntary stewardship and local memory. The pilot shows that voluntary associations, military history clubs, forest districts, local communities and individual enthusiasts play an important role in the care of remote and less visible heritage locations. This is a strength because it creates local legitimacy, practical custodianship and continuity of memory. Yet it is also a vulnerability if care depends too heavily on personal commitment, ageing volunteers, limited resources or temporary project support. In some areas, depopulation and the gradual loss of people who still carry local memory further weaken the social environment that gives these sites meaning. A developing governance solution should therefore not replace voluntary stewardship with purely professional management, but connect it to institutional, municipal and territorial support.

The trail prototyping and heritage mapping undertaken in the pilot should also not be read only as tourism development. They function as governance experiments. By identifying sites, assessing accessibility, coordinating interpretation approaches and building a shared narrative, the route-development process creates a practical structure through which actors can cooperate. In this sense, a route is not merely an output – it is a method for organising the territory. A route, corridor or site network can help make the functional territory legible, but only if it is connected to responsibilities, standards, interpretation, maintenance and cooperation routines. Specific route initiatives on the Slovak side, such as thematic trail development in north-eastern Slovakia, further illustrate how dispersed and relatively invisible heritage can be translated into a territorial framework.

Taken together, the Poland–Slovakia pilot reveals developing maturity as a condition of activated but unfinished governance. The territory is not starting from zero. It has heritage density, emerging institutions, motivated actors, first agreements, trail experiments and cross-border dialogue. Yet it is not mature since coordination remains fragile, standards are incomplete, institutional capacity is uneven and cooperation still risks depending on project momentum. The strongest lesson is therefore that developing territories need a governance approach that stabilises what has begun and turns emerging cooperation into durable territorial coordination.



Analytical summary - what the Poland-Slovakia pilot reveals

Insight	What the pilot shows	What this reveals
High heritage relevance, uneven governance readiness	The territory has dense and recognisable World War I heritage, but institutional maturity remains uneven	Heritage significance does not automatically translate into governance capacity.
Internal differentiation	Museums, cemeteries, protected landscapes, memorial sites, municipalities and voluntary actors operate under different conditions	Developing territories cannot be treated as one homogeneous governance type
Emerging but unfinished cooperation	Workshops, study visits, the Museum Council, trail prototyping and the cooperation agreement show mobilisation, but not yet durable governance	Pilot momentum should not be confused with long-term institutional consolidation.
Institutional anchoring plus territorial coordination	The Gorlice museum initiative is important, but cannot carry the whole governance system alone	Developing maturity requires both visible nodes and a wider territorial framework
Landscape-based and voluntary stewardship	Remote cemeteries, battlefield landscapes and less visible sites often depend on local or voluntary care.	Governance capacity depends not only on institutions, but also on local custodianship and memory
Routes as governance instruments	Trail mapping and route prototyping help connect sites, narratives, accessibility and actors	Routes can reveal how a territory may become more legible and coordinated

C. Transferability assessment: what to retain, adapt, avoid and borrow

C.1. Why direct copying is not appropriate

The Poland–Slovakia pilot provides an important basis for understanding developing maturity, but it should not be copied as a fixed template. Developing territories are transitional and therefore highly sensitive to context. Their heritage fields are already visible and partly mobilised, but not yet sufficiently stable to support mature governance arrangements. The aim



is therefore not to reproduce a specific structure based on the Poland–Slovakia pilot, but to understand what type of territorial coordination function is needed in places where World War I heritage is present, recognisable and partly activated, but where governance remains fragmented and fragile.

Direct copying is also inappropriate because the Poland–Slovakia pilot has a distinctive historical and territorial profile. The territory is linked to the Eastern Front and the Carpathian Front and contains a dense concentration of cemeteries, memorials, battlefield remnants and landscape features. The presence of the Association of Carpathian Euroregion, Poloniny National Park, the City of Gorlice, Jagiellonian University and possible future links towards Ukraine are all important to the pilot, but they are not universal conditions. Other developing territories may have different types of heritage, different institutional geographies and different cross-border opportunities.

Governance practices from initial or mature territories cannot simply and should not be copied mechanically into developing territories without adaptation. Initial territories mainly require a first coordination anchor and basic field constitution. The Hungarian pilot's emphasis on umbrella coordination, education, local memory and stakeholder mobilisation remains useful, but it is insufficient for a developing territory that already needs route logic, cross-border coordination, shared standards and more durable cooperation routines.

The Italy–Slovenia pilot builds on a much stronger base, with established institutions, heritage routes, legal frameworks, museums and prior cross-border cooperation. Practices from mature territories, such as formal multilateral agreements, network-node systems, shared branding and common standards, assume stable organisations with sufficient capacity, experience and legitimacy. Although such instruments may appear attractive to developing territories and may be needed eventually, when imported too early they risk creating formal structures and documents without sufficient operational backing or continuity.

For developing territories, transfer should therefore focus on territorial governance functions, not on fixed organisational forms. What matters is not whether the Carpathian Euroregion model, the Gorlice museum initiative or the exact Poland–Slovakia route logic is replicated, but whether the receiving territory can create a framework that connects dispersed heritage assets, stakeholders and responsibilities into a durable territorial coordination system.

C.2. What should be retained from the Poland-Slovakia pilot case

Several elements from the Poland–Slovakia pilot should be retained for the conceptual solution because they express governance needs that are likely to recur in other developing maturity territories.

The most important of these is the territorial approach. The pilot shows that World War I heritage in developing territories is often not concentrated in one institution or one flagship site,



but spread across landscapes, cemeteries, museums, municipalities, protected areas and local initiatives. A territorial/spatial and narrative framework, whether expressed as a route, corridor, site network or memorial landscape, helps to connect and transform this dispersed heritage into a more governable whole. It provides a structure through which sites, narratives and actors can be related to one another. This is particularly important where heritage is embedded in protected landscapes and remote memorial settings, as illustrated on the Slovak side around Poloniny National Park.

A second element that should be retained is the combination of recognised institutional anchors and broader territorial networks. The Museum Council in Gorlice and the planned museum initiative show that a museum can act as a knowledge, interpretation and coordination node. At the same time, the pilot makes equally clear that developing governance cannot be museum-only. Municipalities, national parks, forest districts, NGOs, researchers, tourism actors, voluntary groups and local communities all play important roles. What should therefore be retained is not simply the presence of institutional actors, but the need to connect very different types of custodians or stewards within one governance framework. Developing territories need visible anchors, but they also need a wider territorial network around them.

The pilot also demonstrates the value of practical cooperation and gradual formalisation. Stakeholder workshops, study visits, trail prototyping and conferences created the opportunity for actors to meet, test cooperation and make governance visible. This is important because developing territories often cannot move directly from fragmentation to formal governance. They need practical activities through which trust, shared understanding and working relationships can gradually develop. The cooperation agreement between the City of Gorlice, Poloniny National Park, the Association of the Carpathian Euroregion and Jagiellonian University is relevant in this respect. It does not yet represent mature governance, but it marks an important step beyond purely informal dialogue.

Finally, the pilot's recognition of voluntary stewardship and digital support should also be retained, albeit critically. Many remote cemeteries and heritage landscapes depend on voluntary associations, military history clubs, forest districts and local enthusiasts, so a developing solution must integrate rather than replace these actors. Likewise, the digital governance tool proved relevant for mapping, self-assessment, knowledge exchange and cooperation, but the pilot also showed that such tools need to be adapted to cemetery-based, landscape-based and municipal governance contexts if they are to be genuinely useful in developing territories.

C.3 What should not be copied from the Poland-Slovakia pilot case

In general, the Poland–Slovakia pilot should not be copied as a fixed template. Its value lies in the governance functions it reveals and not in the exact institutional, territorial or historical



form through which those functions appear. Several elements are therefore useful as lessons, but should not be reproduced mechanically in other developing territories.

The first of these is the specific role of the Association of the Carpathian Euroregion. In the Poland–Slovakia pilot, it plays an important territorial coordination role. However, in another territory the same function may be carried by a regional development agency, inter-municipal platform, museum network, protected-area authority, tourism organisation or cross-border cooperation body. The transferable lesson is the need for a territorial integrator, not the specific institution that performs this role in the pilot.

The same applies to the future museum in Gorlice. The pilot shows that a museum can become a meaningful anchor for interpretation, research, education, coordination and public visibility. However, this should not be interpreted as a necessary requirement that every developing territory must establish a new museum. In some regions, these functions may be concentrated in one institution, while in others they may be distributed across several partners. What matters is that the functions are anchored somewhere in the governance system.

The same caution applies to Poloniny National Park. Its role is highly relevant because it illustrates landscape-based governance and the overlap between nature conservation and war heritage management. However, not every developing territory will have a national park or protected-area authority capable of performing this function.

The Carpathian Front landscape itself should also not be generalised. Other developing territories may have different forms of World War I heritage, such as coastal defence sites, hinterland infrastructure – such as training grounds, camps and medical services – or dispersed memorial landscapes. The territorial framework must therefore respond to the actual heritage geography of the receiving territory rather than reproduce the spatial logic of Poland–Slovakia.

The pilot also contains weaknesses that should not be reproduced. Project dependency, partial coordination and current fragmentation are not transferable strengths. They are precisely the problems that the conceptual solution must address. If future uptake reproduces project-based mobilisation without building routines, responsibilities and funding pathways, the governance solution will remain fragile. Similarly, if the solution focuses mainly on flagship sites, it risks excluding remote, low-visibility and difficult-to-maintain heritage. A credible developing maturity solution must include cemeteries, landscapes, small museums, voluntary maintenance and less accessible places.

The Poland–Slovakia case is particularly valuable because it exposes the gap between heritage density and institutional readiness. For this reason, the pilot should be used as a starting point for overcoming partial and project-based governance, not as a justification for maintaining it. Its transferable value lies in showing how a developing territory can begin to organise itself – its limitations demonstrate why that process still requires consolidation. The conceptual solution



must therefore use the pilot as a catalyst for deeper integration, rather than as a model for loose cooperation.

C.4. What can be borrowed from the other pilots

The other pilots cannot provide ready-made solutions for developing territories, but they can help clarify which governance functions may become relevant as a territory moves from initial towards more structured and mature cooperation. Their relevance therefore lies not in direct transfer, but in careful adaptation.

From the Hungarian pilot, developing territories can borrow the importance of basic coordination, local legitimacy and educational anchoring. Even though developing territories are more advanced than initial ones, they may still contain fragmented actor fields and weak local anchoring. The Hungarian case is a useful reminder that heritage fields do not organise themselves and that a minimum coordination layer is needed before more advanced governance tools can function. It also shows the importance of education, community memory and local activation. The Poland–Slovakia case has strong territorial and cross-border dimensions, but it should not overlook the social basis of heritage. Schools, local communities, archives and civil-society groups can help ensure that territorial coordination is not only administrative or touristic, but also socially meaningful.

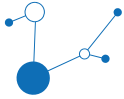
From the Italy–Slovenia pilot, developing territories can borrow the importance of shared identity, common standards and regular coordination. The mature pilot demonstrates the value of recurring meetings, common communication, shared mission and alignment between actors. However these elements should be adapted and introduced in scaled-down and simplified forms. A developing territory should not attempt to reproduce the full complexity of mature network governance, but it can already define basic interpretation principles, common signage guidelines, regular coordination meetings and a first joint communication framework.

From the mature pilot, developing territories can borrow the idea of nodes, but at a lighter scale. Instead of a complex mature node-based architecture, a developing territory may identify a few practical nodes such as a museum, a protected-area body, a municipal coordinator, a research partner and a tourism actor. These nodes can help organise cooperation without imposing an overly heavy governance structure.

The main transferable insight is that developing territories require both bottom-up mobilisation and a more structured territorial coordination. They can borrow foundational legitimacy from initial approaches and strategic coherence from mature approaches and find a way to combine them in a form appropriate to transitional governance.

C.5. Transfer conditions for the conceptual solution

For the conceptual solution to be transferable, it must be understood as a governance logic rather than as a fixed route, institution or cross-border format. What is transferable is not a



single organisational model, but the underlying function: connecting dispersed heritage assets, actors and responsibilities through a territorial coordination framework. These functions may be carried by different types of actors depending on the territory, such as a Euroregion, a museum, a protected-area authority, a regional development agency, a tourism organisation, a municipal partnership or another trusted coordination platform.

Transferability also depends on whether the receiving territory shows the right degree of readiness. A developing territory may already have a visible route, an emerging museum, a cross-border partnership or a group of active municipalities. In another case, heritage density may be high while cooperation remains fragile and uneven. The solution is therefore most appropriate where governance has moved beyond first recognition, but still lacks sufficient continuity, coordination and standardisation to function as a durable territorial system.

A further condition is the ability to accommodate internal differentiation. Developing territories often include museums, cemeteries, protected landscapes, municipal sites, voluntary initiatives and emerging routes at the same time. The conceptual solution is transferable only if it can connect these different site types and management cultures without forcing them into one uniform model.

Finally, transfer depends on proportionality. Developing territories should not remain at the level of informal mobilisation, but they should also avoid importing mature governance instruments before they can sustain them. Formalisation should therefore remain light, practical and tied to concrete cooperation. The conceptual solution should be understood as a transitional governance layer: not as a permanent middle position, but as a way of helping territories move from project-based cooperation towards more durable territorial governance.

C.5. Implications for governance design in developing territories

The analysis above shows that governance design in developing territories must begin from the tension between visible heritage density and incomplete institutional consolidation. Unlike initial territories, developing territories do not need to make their heritage field visible from scratch. The field is already present and often historically coherent. However, that coherence still needs to be translated into territorial governance. The first design task is therefore to connect sites, actors, narratives and responsibilities into a framework that can be recognised and managed collectively.

Governance design must therefore be territorial rather than only institutional. A route, corridor or site network can be useful, but only if it functions as more than a tourism label. It should help structure cooperation, identify nodes, clarify responsibilities, support interpretation and organise communication. In developing territories, territorial framing is a governance instrument before it is a visitor product.



At the same time, governance design must create a coordination layer that is realistic for uneven capacities, yet strong enough to continue beyond a single funding cycle. Developing territories should not be burdened with the full institutional complexity of mature systems, but they cannot rely only on informal enthusiasm or project-based cooperation. The design must create a coordination layer that is realistic for uneven capacities, yet strong enough to continue beyond a single funding cycle. This requires recurring meetings, shared documents, minimum standards, partner responsibilities and a basic mechanism for follow-up.

The design must also integrate different governance scales and different site types. Local site maintenance, municipal responsibilities, protected-area management, regional coordination and cross-border cooperation must be connected rather than left to operate in parallel. Similarly, cemeteries, memorial landscapes, museum exhibitions, routes and protected natural areas cannot all be governed through exactly the same instruments, even when they belong to the same territorial heritage framework.

Finally, governance design must connect professional and voluntary actors. The Poland–Slovakia pilot shows that remote heritage landscapes often depend on volunteers, while long-term visibility and strategic development require links to municipalities, museums, protected-area bodies, researchers and tourism actors. The developing governance solution should therefore not replace local custodianship with professional management, but connect both into a more durable system.

D. Recommended conceptual solution for developing maturity territories

The recommended conceptual solution for developing maturity territories is the **Territorial Coordination Solution**.

This solution is designed for territories where heritage relevance is already visible and local mobilisation has begun, but where governance remains fragmented, uneven and vulnerable to project dependency. It aims to connect dispersed heritage assets, stakeholders and initiatives into a coherent territorial framework supported by light but durable coordination mechanisms. It is especially suited to territories where the governance challenge is not only to connect actors, but also to connect different site types, management cultures and territorial scales.

The solution builds on the project application's reference to a transnational route integrated with museums and other sectors as an instrument for developing territories. However, it interprets this in a flexible way. The route should not be understood only as a tourism product. It should be understood as a governance instrument: a way to connect sites, narratives, actors, standards and responsibilities across a territory.



The Territorial Coordination Solution therefore combines two functions. The first is **territorial framing** – identifying the spatial and narrative logic that connects the heritage. The second is **coordination** – creating a structure that allows actors to work together beyond isolated projects.

D.1. Translation of the pilot-derived solution

The Territorial Coordination Solution does not replace the transnational route developed through the Poland–Slovakia pilot with an unrelated conceptual governance model. Instead, it identifies the governance functions contained within that route-based pilot solution and translates them into a form that can be adopted in other developing maturity territories.

In the pilot context, route development connected military cemeteries, memorials, battlefield locations and cultural landscapes within an accessible historical narrative. Trail mapping and field activities also exposed practical issues relating to access, signage, interpretation, infrastructure and site management. Museums and proposed museum structures contributed knowledge, interpretation, education and coordination, while public authorities, the Carpathian Euroregion, protected-area bodies, researchers, tourism organisations, municipalities, NGOs and local custodians contributed complementary governance functions.

The route therefore operated simultaneously as

- a spatial framework connecting dispersed heritage
- an interpretive framework connecting separate histories and narratives
- a practical mechanism for testing accessibility and visitor experience
- a governance framework connecting organisations, sectors and levels of responsibility

The relationship between the pilot-derived solution and the transferable conceptual solution can be summarised as follows.

Pilot-derived element	Function within the pilot solution	Translation into the Territorial Coordination Solution
Proposed transnational and cross-border heritage routes	Connect dispersed sites and landscapes within a shared spatial and historical structure	A territorial heritage framework expressed through a route, corridor, memorial landscape or connected site network
Mapping of sites, trails, conditions and accessibility	Makes heritage assets, practical gaps and management needs visible across the functional territory	Territorial mapping of sites, actors, responsibilities, accessibility and governance gaps



Carpathian Euroregion as strategic integrator	Provides overall territorial leadership and connects different areas and governance levels	A recognised territorial coordinator with a strategic and integrative function
Strategic, operational and local governance levels	Distributes coordination and implementation responsibilities among different types of actors	A multi-level governance arrangement with explicit strategic, operational and local roles
Gorlice museum concept, Museum Council and other institutional reference points	Provide interpretation, expertise, professional dialogue and regional coordination capacity	Institutional and interpretation nodes embedded within the wider territorial system
National parks, municipalities, museums, NGOs and heritage managers	Connect site management, landscape protection, local implementation and community knowledge	A core partnership combining institutional, territorial, sectoral and local responsibilities
Trail testing, hiking events, site visits and field-based activities	Reveal accessibility, signage, interpretation, maintenance and visitor-management needs	Practical joint activities through which the coordination structure and shared principles are applied
Formal cooperation agreement and proposed recurring cooperation	Creates commitments extending beyond individual activities and project contacts	A continuity mechanism supported by written arrangements, recurring coordination and agreed follow-up
CARPATHIA branding and common route communication	Creates a recognisable public-facing territorial framework	Coordinated representation and communication, where appropriate to the territory

The transferable result is therefore not the exact route alignment, the number of stages, the specific CARPATHIA brand or the institutional configuration of Poland–Slovakia. It is the governance arrangement created around the route: a shared functional territory, a recognised coordinator, connected institutional nodes, distributed responsibilities, shared working principles and recurring practical cooperation.

In another developing maturity territory, this may be expressed through a cross-border trail, a network of cemeteries, a memorial landscape, a museum-and-sites network, a river or mountain corridor, or another spatial framework. The form may change, but the territorial coordination functions should remain recognisable.



D.2. Core components of the solution

The Territorial Coordination Solution consists of six core components.

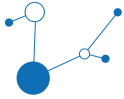
Territorial heritage framework. The territory defines the main sites, landscapes, narratives and historical connections that justify coordinated action. This may take the form of a route, corridor, network of sites or memorial landscape. This framework should not only identify the most visible or visitor-ready sites, but also remote cemeteries, memorial landscapes, battlefield traces, protected natural areas and less accessible heritage locations. Its purpose is to make the territory legible as a connected heritage field rather than as a collection of unrelated sites. The territorial framework should also be sufficiently flexible to accommodate differences in heritage type, management capacity, infrastructure and visitor readiness.

Light coordination structure. A lead body or coordination platform is established. This may be a Euroregion, inter-municipal platform, museum council, regional agency, protected-area body or cross-border working group. The coordination structure should be able to connect different governance levels, including municipalities, regional actors, protected-area managers, museums, research institutions, tourism actors and voluntary custodians. Its role is to maintain the shared territorial framework, convene partners, support joint decisions and provide continuity, without taking over the mandates of the participating organisations.

Institutional and interpretation nodes. Museums, exhibitions, visitor points, archives, national parks, municipal heritage services, research institutions or interpretation centres can act as knowledge and communication nodes within the wider territory. Their role is to provide visibility, expertise, coordination or public interpretation without becoming the sole carrier of the governance system. Different nodes may perform different functions according to their institutional capacity, territorial position and existing mandate.

Shared minimum standards. Partners agree basic standards for interpretation, signage, documentation, visitor information, conservation responsibilities and communication. These standards should also cover cemetery maintenance, visitor access, landscape sensitivity, digital information and responsibilities for follow-up. The aim is not to impose complete uniformity across different site types. Museums, cemeteries, protected landscapes and remote memorial sites may require different approaches. The standards should provide sufficient coherence for the territory to operate as one connected framework while allowing context-sensitive application.

Practical cooperation actions. The territory organises workshops, study visits, trail testing, joint educational work, digital mapping, youth workcamps, local events or pilot interpretation actions. Field-based actions are particularly important in developing territories. Site visits, hiking events, route testing, cemetery mapping and local interpretation pilots can reveal practical governance problems that remain invisible in strategic discussions. These actions



should not remain isolated events. They should be linked to agreed responsibilities and concrete follow-up.

Continuity mechanism. The solution includes recurring meetings, a coordination calendar, partner responsibilities and a pathway from project-based cooperation toward more stable arrangements. Continuity should also include responsibility for maintaining inventories, updating interpretation materials, following up on site access issues and sustaining cooperation with voluntary custodians. The continuity mechanism should ensure that the route or network continues to function as a governance framework after the initial project or funding period has ended.

D.3. Governance arrangements and requirements for uptake

The Territorial Coordination Solution is intended for territories that have moved beyond first-stage recognition but have not yet achieved stable and integrated territorial governance. Its uptake does not require a mature multilateral institution or a fully developed cultural route. It does require

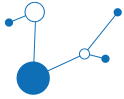
- a recognisable concentration or network of First World War heritage
- sufficient historical, geographical or thematic coherence to justify a territorial framework
- active organisations or initiatives that can form the basis of a wider partnership
- some existing experience of cooperation or stakeholder mobilisation
- and at least one organisation capable of coordinating across several sites, sectors or administrative areas

The route, corridor or connected network provides the visible territorial structure, but the governance functions do not need to be concentrated in the organisation that manages or promotes it. Strategic coordination, museum and interpretation functions, site management, landscape protection, research, tourism development and community engagement may be distributed among several complementary actors.

The territorial coordinator should be sufficiently recognised to convene partners across institutional, sectoral and, where relevant, national boundaries. Its role should include maintaining the shared territorial framework, facilitating collective decisions, coordinating joint actions, supporting the exchange of information and ensuring that agreed actions are followed up.

The core partnership should normally include

- a cross-border, regional or intermunicipal body able to provide territorial coordination and strategic direction



- museums, archives or other heritage organisations able to contribute historical knowledge, documentation and interpretation
- local or regional public authorities able to connect the solution to public policy, administrative responsibilities and territorial planning
- site managers, municipalities, protected-area bodies, civil-society organisations or local custodians able to support practical implementation and site-level management
- tourism or territorial-development actors able to connect the heritage framework to visitor development, communication and wider socio-economic objectives
- research and education actors able to provide expertise, documentation and educational activation (where relevant)

The objective is not to include every possible stakeholder from the outset. The core partnership should cover the strategic, operational and local functions required to manage the territorial framework. Wider actors may subsequently be involved through working groups, thematic activities, local consultations or accession to the cooperation structure.

The governance arrangement should clarify

- the geographical, historical and thematic boundaries of the functional territory
- which organisation coordinates the partnership
- which actors perform strategic, operational and local functions
- which institutions, territories or sites act as principal nodes
- which responsibilities remain with individual partners
- which activities or decisions require joint coordination
- which minimum standards or working principles are shared
- how decisions are taken and information is exchanged
- how local and voluntary custodians are connected to institutional actors
- how communication, maintenance and follow-up will be organised

The arrangements may be recorded in a cooperation agreement, territorial charter, route-management document, joint action plan or another proportionate governance framework. Formalisation should strengthen practical cooperation and continuity rather than create an additional administrative structure without clear operational value.

At minimum, uptake should result in:

- a defined functional territory and shared narrative



- an initial map of sites, actors, existing initiatives and management responsibilities
- an identified territorial coordinator
- a core partnership with agreed strategic, operational and local roles
- identified institutional or interpretation nodes
- a route, corridor or connected site-network concept
- a basic set of shared standards or working principles
- a written cooperation or development framework

The territory can begin progressing towards mature governance when:

- the territorial coordinator is recognised by the participating actors
- strategic, operational and local responsibilities are applied consistently
- shared standards and information are maintained
- coordination continues beyond individual projects and personal contacts
- the partnership is able to take recurring decisions across territorial and institutional boundaries

Scaling may then take place by involving additional sites, municipalities, regions or sectors; extending the route or network; strengthening common interpretation and communication; developing a shared identity; or introducing more formal multilateral agreements. Scaling should improve territorial coherence and governance capacity rather than merely increase the number of participating locations.

D.4. Implementation pathway

Implementation can proceed in four phases.

Phase 1: Territorial recognition. The territory maps its sites, actors, narratives, gaps and possible route or corridor logic. This phase should include both prominent heritage nodes and less visible landscape-based or funerary heritage. The result is a shared understanding of the functional territory and of the sites, actors and relationships that require coordination.

Phase 2: Coordination set-up. A light coordination structure is established, with a recognised territorial coordinator, a core partnership and clear strategic, operational and local roles. The partners identify the principal institutional and interpretation nodes and prepare a first shared cooperation or development document. The result is an agreed coordination framework able to connect the territorial route or network with the organisations responsible for interpretation, site management, landscape protection, research, tourism and local implementation.



Phase 3: Joint activation and standards. The partners put the territorial framework into practice through one or more joint activities and agree minimum standards or working principles for interpretation, documentation, communication, accessibility, site linkage and follow-up. Activities may include route mapping, a connected itinerary, coordinated site visits, trail testing, accessibility assessment, joint interpretation, educational work or a common communication product. Particular attention should be given to applying the shared principles in different site contexts, including museums, cemeteries, protected landscapes, routes and remote memorial sites. The result is a first practical application of the coordination arrangement, clearer distribution of responsibilities and an initial set of shared working principles.

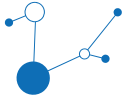
Phase 4: Consolidation and progression. Cooperation routines are stabilised, responsibilities for maintenance and follow-up are confirmed, and funding and development options are explored. The partnership reviews whether the territorial coordinator, institutional nodes, shared standards and joint activities are sufficiently embedded to continue beyond individual projects and personal contacts. Where appropriate, the territory may extend the route or network, involve additional actors or regions, strengthen common interpretation and communication, introduce more formal agreements or prepare for progression towards mature institutional alignment. The result is a more durable territorial governance system and a clear pathway towards stronger multilateral cooperation.

The pathway should remain flexible. Different sites, sectors and territorial areas may progress at different speeds. The essential requirement is that each phase strengthens coordination, distributed responsibility and continuity rather than merely producing a temporary route or project activity.

E. Risks, limitations and conditions for success

The main risk of the Territorial Coordination Solution is that a territory may overestimate its own maturity. A successful workshop, pilot action, route prototype or cooperation agreement may create the impression that durable governance has already been achieved. In reality, such actions are often enabling steps rather than proof of long-term consolidation. The solution therefore depends on whether pilot mobilisation can be translated into recurring routines, shared responsibilities and cooperation that survives beyond the project framework.

A related risk is project dependency. Developing territories often rely on short funding cycles to activate cooperation, but if coordination only exists while a project is active, it will not become a sustainable governance solution. The design should therefore include continuity mechanisms from the beginning: regular meetings, clear partner roles, realistic follow-up actions, shared documentation and an understanding of how responsibilities will be maintained after project funding ends. There is also a risk that the territory is treated as more



homogeneous than it actually is. If the same governance instrument is applied to museums, cemeteries, protected landscapes and remote rural sites without adaptation, the solution may become too generic to be useful.

Another limitation is the tendency to treat the route, corridor or territorial framework mainly as a tourism product. In developing territories, a route can be attractive because it creates visibility and connects sites. However, if it is not supported by interpretation standards, maintenance responsibilities, stakeholder commitments and coordination routines, it may remain a promotional shell. A related risk is passive protection, especially in protected landscapes or complex ownership situations. Heritage may be legally recognised or formally protected, but still remain inaccessible, poorly maintained or weakly interpreted if no actor is clearly responsible for active management.

The solution must also avoid weakening the social basis of governance. If ageing volunteers, local custodians and community knowledge are not connected to institutional support, the local memory environment that gives meaning to many sites may erode over time. The Territorial Coordination Solution is therefore most likely to succeed where there is sufficient heritage density to justify a territorial framework, at least one credible coordinating actor or partnership, willingness among local and cross-border actors to cooperate, and enough interpretative or tourism potential to make joint activation meaningful. Its success should be judged not by the immediate creation of a mature network, but by whether the territory becomes more coordinated, more legible and better prepared for long-term institutional alignment.

F. Conclusion

Developing maturity territories require a transitional governance solution. They are not starting from zero, but they are not yet mature. They contain meaningful heritage, engaged actors and emerging cooperation, yet their governance remains fragile and often project-dependent.

The Territorial Coordination Solution responds to this condition. It connects sites, actors and narratives into a territorial framework, while creating light coordination structures, shared standards and practical cooperation routines. Its value lies in helping territories move from dispersed heritage value and pilot mobilisation toward durable territorial governance. It is therefore a transferable solution for regions that need more than foundational coordination but are not yet ready for fully mature institutional alignment.



Disclaimer

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