



Evaluation Study

Impact assessment of ROP 2007-2013 interventions

POR 2007-2013

KAI 5.1 The restoration and sustainable development of cultural heritage,
and the creation / modernisation of related infrastructures

July 2019

Lot 2

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July 2019

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ABREVIATIONS

CA	Contracting Authority
IDA	Intercommunity Development Agency
RDA	Regional Development Agency
NRF	Non-reimbursable Funds
MA	Management Authority
PA	Priority Axis
SB	State Budget
ROP EB	Regional Operational Programme Evaluation Bureau
CCE	Coordination Committee of Evaluation
RDC	Regional Development Council
ToR	Terms of Reference
EC	European Commission
CC	County Council
MC	Monitoring Committee
NSRF	National Strategic Reference Framework
CCD	County Cultural Directorate
IFD	Implementation Framework Document
KAI	Kea Area of Intervention
EVALSED	Online source that offers guidance regarding evaluation of socio-economic development, with focus on EU cohesion policy
EQ	Evaluation Question
NIH	National Institute of Heritage
NIS	National Institute of Statistics
ERDF	European Regional Development Fund
ESIF	European Structural and Investment Funds
MEF	Ministry of European Funds
MRDPA	Ministry of Regional Development and Public Administration
MC	Ministry of Culture
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
MEP	Multiannual Evaluation Plan
ROP	Regional Operational Programme
ER	Evaluation Report
IR	Inception Report
SR	Synthesis Report
SMIS	Unique System of Project Management



CH	Change Theory
TAU	Territorial Administrative Unit
EU	European Union

Development regions

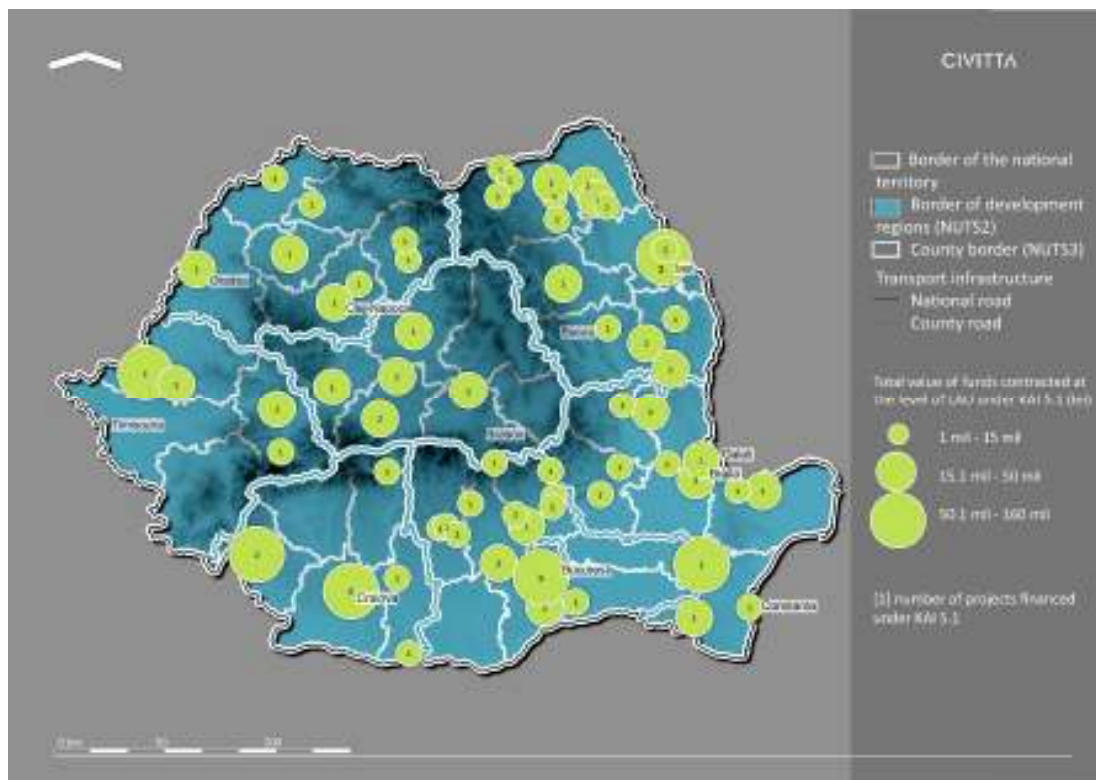
NE	North East
SE	South East
SM	South Muntenia
SV	South West
W	West
NV	North West
C	Center
BI	Bucharest Ilfov

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In the 2007-2013 period, Key Area of Intervention (KAI) 5.1 of the Regional Operational Program (ROP) aimed to support investments for restoration and sustainable valorisation of the cultural heritage, as well as creation/ modernization of related infrastructure. The specific objectives of the KAI 5.1 were to contribute to increasing the importance of tourism as a factor that stimulates economic growth in regions, respecting the principles of sustainable development and environmental protection; to expanding the tourist season and increasing the number of tourists by capitalizing on the local and regional cultural tourism potential on the national and international tourist market. At the same time, one of the expected effects was that the interventions financed from the KAI 5.1 helps create and increase the number of tourists.

KAI 5.1 was the most massive, coherent and concentrated public intervention programmed over the past 30 years to strengthen, rehabilitate, preserve and to give back to the cultural circuit a variety of cultural and historic heritage sites. **Although there have been deficiencies in both programming (as well as in the project selection method), responding to huge financing needs, the KAI 5.1 has produced a positive net impact on some communities at regional and/ or local level.**

Territorial distribution of projects funded under the KAI 5.1



Source: CIVITTA internal processing

KAI 5.1 of the ROP 2007-2013 benefited from a total of 93 financed projects, implemented between 2010-2016, with a total contracted amount of EUR 408.06 million.

Development regions benefited from different funding rates, the differences being significant, with the North-East region obtaining about 3 times more funds than the Bucharest-Ilfov region (the least funds), and the South-East region about 2 times more funds than the Bucharest-Ilfov region. The North-East region is clearly an outlier, leaning the rest of the development regions, both in terms of the value and number of projects financed, but also regarding the impact the projects had on communities and at regional level.

Regarding the funds distribution by types of beneficiaries and regions, it can be noticed that the Local Public Authorities are the main beneficiary of the KAI 5.1, 68% of the funds being used for projects carried out by them, about one third belonging to Cults, more precisely 32%.

Evaluation objective

The objective of this evaluation is to highlight and detail the impact of interventions financed by the KAI 5.1 of the ROP 2007-2013 and the contribution of ERDF to the rehabilitation/ conservation of cultural heritage and the balanced regional and territorial distribution within the country, in line with the objectives of the ROP and the EU cohesion policy principles. For this, answers were provided on the following two evaluation questions:

1. What was the net effect of the intervention and what were the factors that influenced the results?
2. What interventions have produced results, for whom, and under what conditions?

Evaluation findings

Evaluation question: what is the net effect of the intervention of the funds on the cultural heritage and on the related infrastructures?

As regards the indicators for this KAI, the **output indicator was reached at 89% and the result indicator was exceeded by 404%**, partly demonstrating the sustainability of the financed projects. Not meeting the output indicator is not a problem in terms of impact evaluation, the 89 implemented projects being sufficient to produce impact.

Relevance

The projects financed under KAI 5.1 responded, depending on the specific and potential of the regions, in different ways to the needs of cultural tourism. In the absence of national and regional strategies (at the programming stage of the ROP 2007-2013) dedicated to cultural tourism, or generally the situation of the national built heritage, it was difficult to prioritize at the level of program interventions.

KAI 5.1 responded to a huge financing need in the field of cultural and historical heritage rehabilitation, project beneficiaries or representatives of implementing or partner institutions, repeated altogether that all these monuments “had no other chance of being

rehabilitated and consolidated, as there have been no funding alternatives”, government resources being very limited, as well as other resources or other smaller funding programs (eg. cross-border cooperation funds, Norwegian funds). Many of the rehabilitated structures were closed or out of the tourist circuits at the start of the projects, but they are now open and accessible.

Overall, with some exceptions, it can be concluded that the use of the KAI 5.1 funds did not primarily pursue tourism sets, but rather conserving, consolidating, rehabilitating cultural heritage, the tourism component being a secondary one. At the time of the financial allocation, but also at the time of the selection of projects, there has been no national methodology of favouring different tourist destinations based on a strategy. Such strategic documents also lacked at regional level.

During the Program implementation, there were misunderstandings regarding the KAI 5.1 “mission” in the sense that tourism policy experts consider that the ROP did not effectively met tourism objectives in the previous financial year, while cultural heritage experts consider the situation is more nuanced, “by the way it was designed, by results, it partially missed the mission”. Tourism practitioners and experts consider that the Program was not properly calibrated to have significant effects on tourism, while practitioners and experts in the field of cultural heritage considered that many sites of great heritage importance could not benefit from conservation work due to the fact that they are not a tourist destination.

Effectiveness

The program contributed partly, sporadically and with local effects in particular, to the growth of the importance of tourism and culture as a factor driving economic growth in the regions, respecting the principles of sustainable development, the impact being different from one region to another.

It is worth noting the success of projects that targeted cultural heritage sites of fortress type (Suceava, Alba Iulia, Deva, Oradea, Piatra Neamț) and monastery type (Maria Radna din Arad, Moldovița, Sucevița, Dragomirna in Suceava). Also, the ensembles of the Metropolitan Church of Iasi and the Patriarchate in Bucharest, which benefited from massive funding, contributed significantly to pilgrimage tourism.

All beneficiaries reported the increase in the number of tourists due to the implementation of the projects, some increases being significant, and the causal link between the rehabilitated sites and the increase in the number of tourist could easily be made. On the whole, it can be concluded that this objective has been partially achieved and in some situations, the estimated expected results have been exceeded several times.

There was no influence of KAI 5.1 on the expansion of the tourist season, although many of the financed projects have set this indicator.

Local impact

The financed interventions have had an impact at local level, although it varied according to the type of projects and heritage sites that benefited from specific works. The local impact has been characterized by the following features: (1) **benefits for small local entrepreneurs (hostels, restaurants, small manufactures); (2) the use of local labour for different works; (3) the increase of the attractiveness of the locality, as a tourist**

destination; (4) the increase of the number of employees in the field of cultural heritage (direct result).

The impact on local identity. As a result of the attention given to the heritage site that was neglected for a long time, following implementation of projects, **the local communities started to become aware of and to value the heritage unit.** The impact on the community and on local identity is inversely proportional to the size of the locality.

Regional impact

The observable regional impact is mainly due to major projects and less due to synergy between the financed projects. If a region has benefited from major projects, generally financed with larger amounts, the regional impact is perceptible, some of these attracting tourists from national and even international level. The regional impact is mostly felt at the level of the North-East Region (with the largest financial amount) and is due to projects such as “Tourist valorisation of the Metropolitan Assembly Iasi”, “Rehabilitation of the Fortress of Suceava and its protection area”, the interventions from the monasteries of Dragomirna, Sucevița, Moldovița.

The regional impact has been bigger in regions that have been able to alternate touristic sites with historical value, but also relatively imposing, with the existence of regional sites and rare at the same time, at national and even European level. It is the case of the Center Region, that attracts tourists from Transylvania, but also from Bucharest or other even countries, with a combination of attractions such as fortresses (Rupea, Alba Iulia) and fortified Evangelical monasteries, all in a natural environment favourable to eco-tourism.

National impact

In terms of national impact, this **can be perceived especially at the level of solving emergencies and saving inherent value heritage assets**, KAI 5.1 providing the opportunity for significant investments, 89 more complex or simpler projects have contributed significantly to extending the life span of numerous national heritage sites

As regards tourism (increasing the tourist attraction capacity and contributions to local/ regional economies), the program impact cannot be assessed at national level. However, large projects, supported by investments and adjacent interventions of LPA or cults, have the capacity to attract tourists both nationally and internationally. This is the case of several rehabilitated sites in the North-East area, such as the Metropolitan Church of Iasi, the Fortress of Suceava, the 14th - 15th century Monasteries included in the Unesco heritage. In the West Region, we mention the Maria Radna Monastery, which attracts numerous tourists from Hungary, in the Alba Iulia Fortress Central Region, in the Bucharest-Ilfov Region, the Patriarchal Palace.

Overall, regional funding has ensured a good national distribution of funds. However, it should be emphasized that this balanced distribution reflects a strategic approach of defensive type (reduction of the number of weaknesses/ mitigating threats) and not an offensive one, which not only builds on strengths and opportunities, capitalizing the natural/ heritage advantages that some regions, not all, own.

Efficiency

The efficiency of the projects depends on the tourism potential of the region (or sub-region) and is characterized by a multitude of attractions with thematic consistency: fortified monasteries, monasteries from the 14th and 15th centuries, medieval fairs). If the financing for the future ROP will follow an "offensive" strategy (increasing the number of tourists) and not "defensive" (preservation of the cultural heritage everywhere), the possibility that the financial allocations should be differentiated by regions should be avoided, depending on a coefficient to express tourism potential.

Unexpected effects

As a result of renovations, the interest in the symbolic space offered by cultural heritage sites has increased, generating an increase in demands and the number of activities taking place inside them: thematic workshops, events with specific themes (such as history, archaeology, cave painting, photography and painting exhibitions), festivals, plays, etc. KAI 5.1 contributing to improving cultural life in localities where it funded specific cultural heritage interventions.

Obvious visual discrepancies have appeared between different parts of an assembly, more exactly between those that benefited from investment/works and those that did not, reducing the attractiveness of non-renovated parts (thus, put in the shade).

Evaluation question: What are the factors that determined the net effect?

The volume of used funds

KAI 5.1 was the most massive, coherent and concentrated public intervention programmed over the past 30 years to strengthen, rehabilitate, preserve and to give back to the cultural circuit a variety of cultural and historic heritage sites.

The impact of KAI 5.1 was relatively proportional to the level of financial intensity of each region. The North-East region clearly performed better in comparison with the rest of the development regions, both in terms of value and number of financed projects, but also through their impact on communities and at regional level, confirmed by the qualitative data that was gathered

The type and capacity of beneficiaries

Regarding the distribution of funds by types of beneficiaries and regions, it can be noticed that LPA is the main beneficiary of KAI 5.1, 68% of the funds being used for projects carried out by them and about one third by Cults, namely 32%.

Bucharest - Ilfov region is the only region where the cults received more funds, this being due to the project "Restoration, consolidation and protection of the Patriarchate Palace Bucharest" financed with a considerable sum. The cults also received considerable funds for the cultural sites in the North-East Region, given the rich monastic heritage of the region.

Unintended effects

There were situations where consolidation/ rehabilitation works did not respect (1) the traditional methods used in restoration work, (2) the original layout and (3) the conservation project, causing the so-called Disney effect, which implies that some elements are exaggerated to increase the spectacularity of the heritage site.

Impact on beneficiaries

Following the implementation of the projects, the beneficiaries' capacity to design and implement interventions on cultural heritage sites, both from European sources and from other sources of financing, has increased. In this respect, especially at the LPA level, the beneficiaries' capacity to act strategically increased, increasing strategic coherence at regional policy level and programs.

Regarding the capacities of the beneficiaries, for the vast majority of them, there are poor marketing and promotion capacities in terms of tourism and their introduction into circuits of some tourism operators. Also, because two thirds of the interventions that have benefited from the funding are in the direct management of State institutions, there is a very low level of economic valorisation, by setting up commercial spaces, although many of the evaluated projects have already exited the limitations imposed by the provisions classifying them as *income generating* projects.

A positive result of the program is the restoration of the monastery museums inside the churches, thus limiting irreparable losses, which are now managed according to conservation standards.

Innovative projects

The church "St. Nicolae" from Aroneanu, Iasi County holds a technological novelty, being placed on seismic isolators, its displacement caused by earthquakes (in centimetres over the years) being monitored by satellite. The church has become a destination for architects and builders interested in this technological innovation, both in Romania and abroad

Implementation problems

Culture committees at national/local level

Culture committees have the role of endorsing projects that involve works and interventions on heritage sites and of assessing whether the interventions complied with the standards included in the approved design documents. During the implementation of KAI 5.1, there was a systemic lack of capacity of these committees to fulfil their tasks, significantly delaying endorsement and, consequently, the start of works.

Problems related to archaeological discharge

There were several projects that were delayed by the fact that the designers/ beneficiaries neglected this legal obligation, did not schedule it among the project activities and did not provide budget for appropriate archaeological works (of preventive type) in the early stages, in order to be able to receive quickly the archaeological discharge.

Technical problems specific to the consolidation and restoration of historical monuments

Interventions on historical monuments cannot be planned rigorously because they can contain problems that cannot be identified in the design stage and which, as a rule, generate high costs in the execution stage. Unfortunately, these costs could not be classified as eligible expenditure. In the case of beneficiaries with adequate financial capacity (county councils, etc.), these problems were overcome more easily, being borne from their own budgets. In the case of beneficiaries with smaller financial capacity, these problems led to delays in the execution of works and project delays.

Structural issues in thematic area of KAI 5.1 (specialised economic operators and human resources)

One of the problems identified is the **lack of links between the beneficiaries of the projects and the tour operators**: some destinations are not sufficiently known and are not promoted by the operators neither at national level nor at international level. This problem is also caused by the lack of a clear strategy in the field of tourism, at central level.

Human resources

Even if things were good in terms of the project management teams in the eight regions, except for the Center and North-East regions, there were big problems in identifying technical experts and craftsmen specializing in traditional handicraft works to be hired and to perform the necessary works. One of the existing problems of KAI 5.1 (there are differences from one region to another) was **the identification of economic operators with technical capabilities for restoration and conservation work**. Although there are specialists, graduates of higher education in the fields required for restoration/ conservation works, they work individually, not together with economic agents. The lack of specific architecture specialists, restorers, heritage managers, restoration engineers, designers has led to delayed tender procedures or tender procedures not providing for a set of necessary specific skills because there were no bidders.

Evaluation question: What type of intervention has produced results, for whom, and under what circumstances?

In order to understand what type of intervention produces results and for whom, we have analysed the most representative projects, the typology of beneficiaries and the typology of interventions, in relation to the volume of funding and the morphology of the development regions and the tourism potential.

In the *North-East Region*, KAI 5.1 had the greatest impact. This is due both to (1) the specificity of the region, which is rich in historical heritage (fortresses, memorial houses and museums) and ecumenical heritage sites (monasteries, churches) and (2) the larger number of funded projects and the higher allocation of funds which responded both to a great need of works and to the high tourism potential. In the North-West region, the Metropolitan Church of Moldova and Bucovina is also situated, which is a tourist and religious pilgrimage destination that has a great impact at national level. The impact of investments exceeds the administrative borders of the region, as they attract national and even international tourists. At territorial level, there is a good distribution of projects, with a higher density in Suceava county and Botoşani (in the historical Bucovina), which offers the possibility of thematic

tourist routes. The existence of these routes impacts directly the local economies, but also that of the region.

The South-East Region is the second region in terms of attracting and use of funds under KAI 5.1 of ROP 2007-2013, with a number of 19 projects funded, totally amounting to Lei 253,775,843.10. The profile of beneficiaries is more of a public institution type (CC and city and municipality mayoralities), with only three of the 19 main beneficiaries being worship units. At the level of the South-East region as well, the territorial distribution is balanced, and the counties benefited, on average, of about 3 projects. In this region, the project “Restoration, consolidation, protection, conservation and valorisation of the archaeological site Capidava Fortress” stands out. In the South-East region, projects for the restoration and consolidation of heritage sites with intrinsic value of heritage/ historical value prevail, their tourism potential being secondary. Although the seaside (Constanta County) is one of the most touristic areas in Romania, only one project in the South-West region, funded under KAI 5.1, addressed it directly¹. The good geographic distribution of the projects, in relation to the region morphology, does not also ensure, however, in the case of this region, the necessary conditions for growth based on cultural tourism: the projects are disparate, without any thematic and historical connection, the dedicated tourist routes thus missing. However, the Danube River can offer the early conditions for a synergic development of tourism on the Brăila - Galați - Tulcea section, where a cluster of 5 projects were funded.

Bucharest is a special case in terms of cultural heritage and its place in attracting tourists, given its size, the status of Capital, the very large number of heritage objectives - approx. 10% of the built heritage mass is in Bucharest etc. Bucharest attracts because it is the capital of Romania and the main city, but tourists do not come especially to visit heritage sites, the visits to such places are additional to the tourist behaviour. In Bucharest, the main funded heritage site aimed to consolidate and protect the Patriarchal Palace monument, owned by the Orthodox Church, the budget of this project being larger than all other projects financed: The Triumphal Arch, Cesianu House, Nicolae Minovici Museum, Vasile Urseanu Astronomical Observatory and a church - St. Sofia Floreasca. In this region, one can note that projects are exclusively focused in Bucharest City, while Ilfov County has no funded project

The projects in *South-West region* were concentrated in Craiova City (6 out of 11), although most of the budget went to Mehedinți County, for the two projects in Drobeta-Turnu Severin (1) Rehabilitation of the Iron Gates Region Museum and (2) its valorisation as a tourism product Rehabilitation of the Cultural Palace Theodor Costescu and the Severin Fortress. Projects in the South-West region rather fall within the typology of projects that invested in the rehabilitation/preservation of projects with intrinsic heritage value and lower tourist potential. In the South-West Region, the needs regarding the tourism activity were identified in the Regional Development Strategy 2007-2013. The region is a land of monasteries, churches and sketes, being the second region, after Moldova, as number and importance of these religious settlements. The region totals over 60 Orthodox monasteries and sketes, from

¹ HIPERB - 21st Century Museum for Tourists in Constanta, a project for rehabilitation and restoration of the facade of the Constanta National Museum of History and Archeology.

all the historical periods of the region, starting with the 14th century, some of them having exterior frescoes of special value and being places of pilgrimage, with good tourist potential. The main problem experienced in the area is access to the rehabilitated sites, which requires a lot of investments in the transport infrastructure.

The West region has benefited from a small number of projects, only four. However, the projects were well planned and executed, having a direct impact on the increase in the number of tourists. The most significant project in the region in terms of impact, was “The development of cultural tourism in the West Region by renovating and including Radna Church and Monastery into the tourist circuit”. Many pilgrimages are organized at the Maria Radna Monastery, which is an attraction of religious tourism, with a tradition in this from before the communist period. The main tourists come from abroad, most of them being ethnic Hungarians. Following rehabilitation, the cultural and ecumenical life has grown, attracting more tourists (from about 80,000/ year to 110,000/ year), and the local economy has increased.

In *the North-West region*, there were limitations in terms of prioritizing interventions (projects) according to their heritage value, one of the causes being the ownership: ROP did not finance interventions on heritage sites under private ownership, following retrocessions. Thus, heritage sites of significant value could not apply for funding (e.g. the Castle in Bonțida, the Castle in Jilău etc.). The North-West Region, through its cultural circuits, has a good potential to attract the Hungarian tourists visiting Transylvania, especially tourist attractions related to the history and culture of the Hungarians. The region benefited from a number of 12 projects. The specificity of projects in this region is given by the fact that half of them had as objectives the development of tourist circuits such as medieval fairs, wooden churches and Roman castra.

The *Center region* benefited from seven projects and a budget of Lei 174,602,963.70 (the second lowest, after B-I). The region benefits from a very good cultural tourism potential, with many heritage sites of historical significance for Romanians, Hungarians and Germans, which was also reflected in the projects funded under KAI 5.1. The most significant project carried out in the region was “Rehabilitation of Historical Center Eastern Route, Southern Route, Northern Route Vauban Fortification -Alba Iulia - access ways, lighting and specific urban furniture”, which reported a record number, of 154,700 tourists annually. Also, we note the projects that highlighted the fortified evangelical churches in Transylvania, as well as the rearrangement and preservation of the medieval fortress in Târgu-Mureș. Of the six counties in the region, four received funding under KAI 5.1, in particular Alba and Sibiu counties. As regards the beneficiaries of the funds, seven of them were territorial-administrative units and two were religious units, both evangelical. One of the reasons why the projects in this Region had good results was that they benefited from synergic effects generated by other cultural heritage projects, which were carried out/ continued in the current programming stage and financed from other sources.

In the *South-Muntenia region*, 14 projects were completed, totalling Lei 183,730,839.90. The profile of the main beneficiaries was of the small town type. Of the 14 beneficiaries, six were cults and eight were local administrative units, towns and county councils. In the South-Muntenia Region, we note the project “The restoration and sustainable development of cultural heritage, as well as the creation / modernisation of related infrastructures in the

area of the Potlogi Brâncoveanu assembly” funded with Lei 42,809,489.34. The funded projects are rather small and disparate in this region, with little potential to be included into tourist circuits, but having a very good advantage, if promoted properly, to attract one-day day tourists from the Bucharest urban area due to the proximity to the capital city. In this regard, we mention the very good, but underused potential of the Golești Museum Assembly, of the Potlogi Brâncoveanu Assembly and even the Filipescu Pană Mansion from Filipeștii de Târg. Unfortunately, these cultural sites are not sufficiently promoted and used in tourism and usually, they do not provide for extremely useful complementary facilities such as restaurants, the adjacent sale of small manufactures, and have visiting programs of museum type, from 9.00 am 17.00, which makes them less attractive. The rehabilitated heritage sites have a lower tourist potential, but an increased intrinsic heritage value

Bucharest inhabitants can be the main target for these heritage sites, which today are in excellent conditions. It is recommended to carry out well-targeted promotion campaigns to attract one-day tourists. Day tourism, even if it is not as financially productive as one day or several days tourism, can be extremely productive for manufactures and related services (e.g. restaurants, entertainment facilities) if large volumes of tourists are attracted. And the proximity to Bucharest, as well as the existence of average size town (Pitești, Ploiești etc.) are advantages that should be better turned to account.

Conclusions, recommendations and lessons learned

RELEVANCE

Conclusion 1. KAI 5.1. was the most massive, coherent and focused public intervention programmed over the past 30 years to consolidate, rehabilitate, preserve and to restore to the cultural circuit, cultural and historical heritage objectives. Although there have been shortcomings in both programming (as well as in the project selection method), responding to huge financing needs, the KAI 5.1. has produced a positive net impact on some communities at regional and / or local level.

Recommendation: To better prioritize interventions according to (1) tourism potential, (2) historical and cultural value and the urgency of status of heritage objectives / imminence of irreversible degradation, **projects should be evaluated according to criteria clear, abandoning the first-come-first-served method, so that funding for truly significant tourism-related objectives can be prioritized and can generate revenue and ensure economic growth.**

Conclusion 2. The development regions benefited from differently sized funding. The Northeast region is clearly positioned in front of the rest of the development regions, both in terms of the value and number of projects funded, but also by the impact they have had on communities and at regional level.

Lesson Learned: Concentrating funds in regions with already proven tourism potential (traditionally) produces significant synergic effects. The offensive strategic approach, which not only builds strengths and opportunities, but also maximizes the natural / patrimonial

advantages it holds, gives the best results for objectives aimed at increasing the number of tourists (not saving the disparate patrimony with intrinsic value).

Recommendation: A better customization of the program was required according to the specific needs of the regions (cultural tourism needs are different in Bucovina towards Oltenia) by carrying out regional analyzes.

Conclusion 3. The LPA is the main owner of historical and cultural heritage objectives, which followed the destination of the funds: as regards the distribution of funds by types of beneficiaries and regions, the LPA is the main beneficiary of the KAI 5.1, **68% of the funds being used for projects run by the LPA, about one-third of which accounted for Cults, namely 32%.**

Conclusion 4. The projects financed responded to the needs of regional cultural tourism, depending on the specifics and potential of the regions. In the absence of national and regional strategies (at the programming stage of the ROP 2007-2013) dedicated to cultural tourism or generally to the situation of the nationally built heritage, it was difficult to prioritize interventions at program level.

Recommendation: Prioritize, through project evaluation / selection factors, historical and cultural heritage objectives that may be part of thematic routes. Inherent value has all the heritage objectives (because of that they are classified as such), **but the tourist potential does not always overlap with heritage value, an integrated strategic approach being particularly important, favoring the creation of tourist routes** (on thematic basis). This does not imply the financing of the development of tourist routes (the economic activity to be undertaken by the tour operators with market-specific instruments), but the prioritization of the objectives according to the tourist potential, based on ex-ante analyzes that include data collected from national and regional tourism operators.

Conclusion 5. KAI 5.1 responded to a huge financing need in the field of cultural and historical heritage rehabilitation, the beneficiaries of the projects or the representatives of the implementing or partner institutions, the government resources being very limited in this area. Many of the rehabilitated structures were closed or out of the tourist circuits at the start of the projects, but they are now open and accessible.

Recommendation: To favor through the selection criteria / score awarded in the evaluation of applications for funding, significant interventions (large) with high attraction (regardless of the visitor's motivation - tourist or pilgrimage) and favoring the development of the horizontal economy: tourism operators, small manufactures etc.

Conclusion 6. On the whole, with some exceptions, it can be concluded that the use of the KAI 5.1. funds did not primarily pursue tourism objectives, but rather conserving, consolidating and rehabilitating cultural heritage, with the tourism component being secondary. At the time of the financial allocation, but also at the time of the selection of projects, there is no national view of favoring some tourist destinations included in a strategy. Such strategic documents lacked also at regional level.

Recommendation: Developing strategies based on unitary methodology analyzes by the Regional Development Agencies and with the direct involvement of the Ministry of Tourism

and the Ministry of Culture on cultural heritage assets with tourism potential underpinning similar regional KAI 5.1.

EFFECTIVENESS (Achieving Goals)

Conclusion 7: The program has contributed in part, sporadically and with local effects in particular to *increasing the importance of tourism and culture as a factor driving economic growth in the regions, respecting the principles of sustainable development*, with different impacts from region to region.

Lesson Learned: The success of projects that have targeted cultural heritage of the city type (Suceava, Alba Iulia, Deva, Oradea, Piatra Neamt) and monastery type (Maria Radna from Arad, Moldovita, Sucevita, Dragomirna in Suceava). Also, the Metropolitan Church of Iasi and the Patriarchy in Bucharest, which benefited from massive funding, contributes significantly to pilgrimage / ecumenical tourism.

Conclusion 8: All beneficiaries reported an increase in the number of tourists due to the implementation of the projects, some increases being significant, and the causal link between the rehabilitated objective and the increase in the number of tourists can be easily made. On the whole, it can be concluded that this objective has been partially achieved and in some situations even the estimated results have been exceeded several times.

Conclusion 9: There was no influence of KAI 5.1 on the expansion of the tourist season, or if it existed, was negligible. The expectation to increase the tourist season due to interventions on cultural heritage, present through one of the objectives 5.1., was unrealistic.

Recommendation: Setting realistic objectives, adapted to the specificity and territorial dimension of Romania and avoiding the formulation of vague, non-quantifiable objectives and difficult to establish causal relations between the intervention and the expected effects.

IMPACT

Local Impact

Conclusion 10: The interventions financed have had a variable impact, depending on the type of projects and heritage objectives that have benefited from specific works. The local impact has been characterized by the following features: (1) benefits of small local entrepreneurs (hostels, restaurants, small manufactures); (2) the use of local labor for different works; (3) increase the attractiveness of the locality as a tourist destination (with or without accommodation); (4) Increase in the number of employees in the field of cultural heritage (direct result).

Conclusion 11: The program has had a good impact on local identity where the patrimony objective has been neglected for a long time. Following the implementation of the projects, local communities have realized the value of heritage units in their localities. The impact on the community and on local identity is inversely proportional to the size of the locality. Local pride and sense of belonging can be important factors for building a community and a local economy around the patrimony subject if accompanying measures are implemented.

Recommendation: Imposition of conditions or additional scoring when selecting projects for the involvement of local communities (work, craftsmen, etc.). Heritage conservation objectives should not be limited to the built heritage, but should also encourage the development of restoration / conservation skills at local level through the use of local resources. By using local resources, the "authenticity we seek" when we visit historical objectives is achieved, and they need to use techniques, materials (material layer) and concepts traditionally used.

Regional impact

Conclusion 12: The observable regional impact is mainly due to major projects and less synergy between funded projects. Where a region has benefited from major projects, the regional impact is perceptible, some of which attract tourists from national and even international. The regional impact is especially felt at the level of the North-East region.

Lesson Learned: The regional impact was better in regions that could alternate tourist attractions with historical value but also relatively impressive with the existence of regional and rare objectives at national and even European level. It is the case of the Center region that attracts tourists from Transylvania, but also from Bucharest or other countries, with a combination of attractions such as fortresses (Rupea, Alba Iulia) and fortified Evangelical monasteries, all in a natural environment favorable to eco-tourism.

National impact

Conclusion 13: As regards tourism (increasing the capacity to attract tourists and contributions to local / regional economies) at national level, the impact of the program can not be assessed. However, it is obvious that large projects, supported by investments and adjacent interventions of APLs or cults, have the capacity to attract tourists both nationally and internationally. It is the case of several rehabilitated objectives in the North-East area, such as the Metropolitan Church of Iasi, the Fortress of the Suceava, the Monasteries of the 14th-15th century included in the UNESCO patrimony. In the West region, the Maria Radna Monastery attracts numerous tourists from Hungary, we have the Alba Iulia Fortress in the Center region, and in the Bucharest-Ilfov region the Patriarchy Palace.

Recommendation: It is recommended, as a result of proven success, to prioritize, by project selection factors, the fortress-type heritage or monasteries. They have very good economic potential.

Unintended effects

Conclusion 14: There have been situations of consolidation / rehabilitation work that did not respect (1) the traditional methods used in restoration work, (2) the original design, and (3) the conservation project, by the so-called Disney effect.

Recommendation: (1) Granted funding should impose rules that are much more attentive to respecting the specificity of the objective to be restored: restoration criteria (technical indicators) must be clearer and better monitored so that the works are restorative and not to have the appearance of "something new". It is recommended that interventions on heritage objectives be minimal and that much attention be paid to compliance with restoration plans in order for authenticity to be respected. (2) In the absence of the capacity of the commissions subordinated to the Ministry of Culture, it is necessary to create its own technical control / audit mechanisms at program level.

Implementation

National / Zonal Culture Commissions

Conclusion 15: Culture committees have the role of endorsing projects involving work and interventions on heritage objectives and assessing whether interventions have respected the standards contained in the approved design documents. During the implementation of the KAI 5.1, there was a systemic lack of the capacity of these committees to carry out their tasks, delaying the endorsement and, consequently, starting work.

Recommendation: Strengthen the capacity of the cultural / heritage commissions at central and local level by establishing clearer and more efficient working mechanisms, to be identified and implemented by the Ministry of Culture.²

Problems related to archaeological discharge

Conclusion 16: There have been several projects that have been delayed by the fact that the designers / beneficiaries have neglected this legal obligation, did not foresee it among the project activities and have not budgeted appropriate archaeological works (preventive) from the initial stages, in order to be able to receive the archaeological discharge discharge as a matter of urgency.

Lessons Learned: Specific KAI 5.1 interventions have a very high probability of occurrence of unforeseen situations: during the works, new problems have been discovered that impose adjacent works. These types of funding must have a greater degree of flexibility for unforeseen expenditure or a wider financial envelope to cover work that can not be anticipated.

Recommendations: (1) Prioritize projects that already have the archaeological discharge; (2) Funding (to become eligible) of the expenditure necessary for archaeological discharge, providing for flexible funding for unforeseen expenditure; (3) Achieving a separate financial tire (from European or national funds) from which the beneficiaries who realize that the archaeological discharge is much more complex than originally thought to be able to access, as a matter of urgency, the necessary funds for archaeological works.

Conclusion 17: Interventions on historical monuments can not be rigorously planned because they may contain structural problems that can not be identified at the design stage and

² The details of the internal mechanisms to be put into operation by M. Culture are not subject to this assessment. The evaluation team is confronted with this aspect, of the poor functioning of the commissions that have the task of endorsing the work on heritage objectives

which usually generate high costs at the execution stage which can not be classified as eligible expenditure. In the case of beneficiaries with adequate financial capacities (county councils, etc.) these problems were overcome more easily, being borne from their own budgets. For beneficiaries with low financial capabilities, these problems have led to delays in the execution of the works.

Recommendation: Increase the percentage for unforeseen expenses. If the maximum ceiling is set by European regulations, it is advisable to report this situation to institutions with legislative initiative at EU level (European Commission and European Parliament) to amend legislation to increase the unforeseen expenditure threshold for funding dedicated to cultural heritage interventions.

Specific structural issues in the KAI's thematic area 5.1

Conclusion 18 (a): One of the problems at the level of KAI 5.1 (leaving differences from one region to another) was the identification of economic operators with technical capabilities for restoration and preservation work.

Conclusion 18 (b): Even though project management teams have been good at the eight regions, with the exception of the Centre and Northeast regions, there have been great problems in identifying technical and traditional craftsmanship experts handicrafts to be hired and perform the necessary work. The lack of specific architecture specialists, restorers, patronage managers, restorer engineers, designers has led to delayed bidding procedures or rebates to a set of specific skills because there were no bidders.

Recommendation: Introduction and motivation of beneficiaries to carry out also "soft" professional training activities aimed at vocational training of craftsmen, as well as professional certification thereof. Better correlation with ESF funding, the achievement of professional standards by INP, could facilitate skills development and provide a labor force appropriate to the rehabilitation / restoration of cultural heritage objectives.

Conclusion 19: Significant differences have emerged between the rehabilitated objectives as part of the subdivisions and unreachable assemblies, the latter being shadowed.

Recommendation: Inclusion / eligibility of redevelopment works and assemblies subdivided into the general project, in order to ensure complete and attractive touristic interventions.

Program management and control system

Conclusion 20: Different methods of collecting and presenting data in sustainability reports were used at the level of regions or even within the same region (some beneficiaries used nominal values, other beneficiaries used percentage values without being specified nominal value) which makes it impossible to accurately quantify the increase in the number of tourists in nominal values as well as the percentage estimates. The two program indicators (project Number of projects founded by KAI 5.1 and number of newly created / maintained jobs) are insufficient for the mid-term and ex-post evaluations to be carried out with all due diligence. There was a confusion, also signaled by the report previous assessment that the indicator "No. newly created jobs" can be understood differently from the indicator "no. persistently maintained places."

Recommendation: Identification of more relevant program indicators, clearer formulations and easier to monitor is required. Also, imposing a standard reporting format (especially in the case of sustainability reports) using unique numerical systems: either nominal values or percentages whose initial baseline is to be specified and using unique time intervals (e.g. No. of tourists per year).

Sustainability

Conclusion 21. The projects integrate good sustainability and the effects of the interventions are maintained. However, there are significant discrepancies in the capacities of beneficiaries to (1) achieve and follow conservation / maintenance plans, (2) promote and develop "selling stories" (interpretation plans), (3) management / business for the economic valorization of cultural heritage objectives from a touristic point of view.

Recommendation (a): Introducing the obligation (through future guidelines) that beneficiaries should carry out activities to increase their capacity to achieve and follow plans for preservation / maintenance of heritage objectives, specific to museum practices, to be rehabilitated from European funds. Such activities can be extracted from the standards presented in the Law on Museums and Public Collections, no. 311/2003.

Recommendation (b): Development of interpretation plans. Heritage objectives built generally have many non-explicit histories, which is why they are not known. As soft, adjacent actions, it is recommended to impose activities to develop interpretation plans for the public that contain (in keeping with the historical truth) some stimuli and interpretations. These activities are meant both to attract more tourists and to preserve the immaterial aspect of the national heritage.

Recommendation regarding the evaluation: Given the accessibility and quality of the data, as well as the willingness of the actors involved to get involved in the evaluation process, we believe that a realistic duration for an impact assessment should be 8 months.

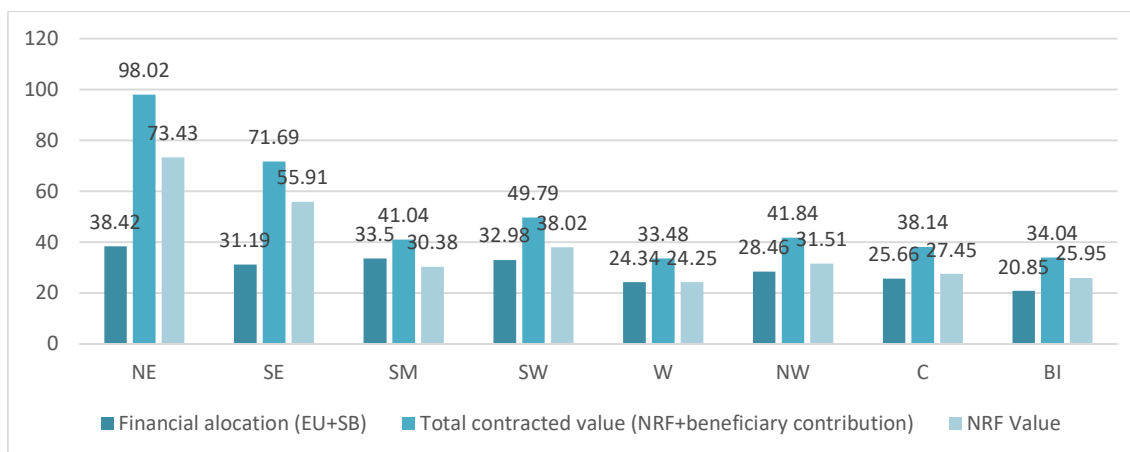
2. EXISTING SITUATION

In the 2007-2013 period, the Key Area of Intervention (KAI) 5.1 "The restoration and sustainable development of cultural heritage, and the creation / modernisation of related infrastructures" of the Regional Operational Programme (ROP) aimed to support investments for preservation, restoration, consolidation, rehabilitation, protection of historical monuments. The indicative financial allocation for the period 2007-2013 related to KAI 5.1 was EUR 235.40 million, of which EUR 200.09 million ERDF contribution, the rest being represented by the national contribution (from public funds), of which EUR 30.60 million from the State budget and EUR 4.71 million from local budgets.³

³ According to Applicant's Guide KAI 5.1 http://old.fonduri-ue.ro/res/filepicker_users/cd25a597fd-62/Finantari/POR/DMI-5.1/Ghid.Consolidat-DMI-5.1.pdf

In the framework of calls for the KAI 5.1, 179 requests for funding were submitted, total worth EUR 710.9 million, with a requested EC contribution of EUR 495.1 million, thus exceeding the initial allocation (requested funds amounted to 191% of the allocation).⁴ 93 projects were contracted, with a total value of non-reimbursable financing (NRF) of EUR 306.9 million⁵, the total contracted value being EUR 408.06. Moreover, 5 projects were terminated, total worth EUR 37.6 million, of which EUR 264 million non-reimbursable financing (Figure 1).⁶

Figure 1 Regional distribution of funds KAI 5.1 (mil. EUR)



Source: Administrative data MA ROP, own processing

Overall, the average value of implemented projects was approximately EUR 4 million (total EU funds, SB and employer's contribution), with the highest average value recorded in the West region (4 projects with an average value of EUR 8.3 million), and the lowest average value in the region South - Muntenia (EUR 2.9 million). At the reference date of the analysis⁷ all contracted projects were completed.

The 93 projects had a total number of 82 unique beneficiaries, among which 34 local public authorities, 32 worship units, 15 partnerships, 1 non-governmental organization. Their regional distribution is presented in Figure 2.

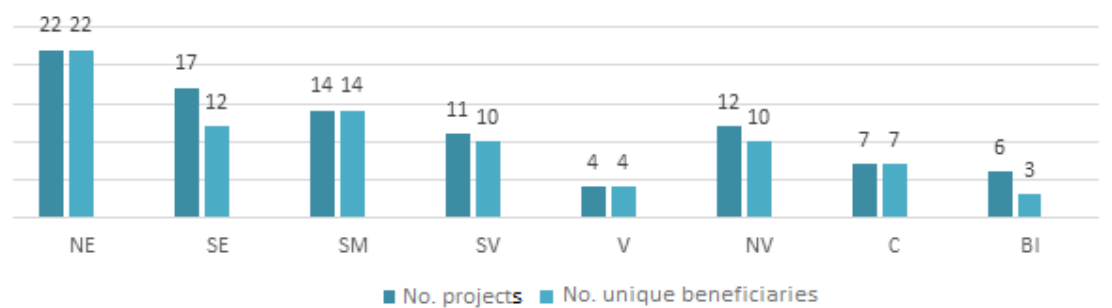
Figure 2 Regional distribution of projects and beneficiaries of KAI 5.1

⁴ According to the Final Implementation Report ROP 2007-2013

⁵ The EUR amounts were calculated from RON, at the exchange rate of EUR 4.54, at the end of 2016

⁶ Source of data: MRDPA - MA ROP - information processed from the financing contracts analyzed by the evaluation team

⁷ 31.12.2018



Source: Administrative data MA ROP, own processing

3. STAGES OF THE STUDY

3.1 DESCRIPTION OF THE METHODOLOGY

The evaluation was a causal one, comparing the impact elements achieved both in terms of positive and negative results in order to understand the net effect of the intervention. The impact analysis was carried out in a holistic manner, examining both the direct effects of KAI 5.1 interventions and the indirect, propagated effects. The main indicators used for impact evaluation were those related to the intervention logic of KAI 5.1:

- Newly created/maintained jobs - cultural heritage (this indicator was treated cumulatively);
- The number of tourism projects (supported by KAI 5.1)

For a clearer picture of the effects of the KAI 5.1, a number of additional indicators were identified in the analysis process:

- Evolution of the number of visitors/infrastructure;
- The number of rehabilitated infrastructures;
- The number of monuments reintroduced into the tourist circuit;

The methodological approach for answering to evaluation questions included evaluation based on theory (by reconstructing and questioning the program theory of), and the methods and techniques provided in this respect include documentary research, interviews, focus groups, case studies, inquiry/survey, nominal group, panel of experts, etc. The methods and techniques used are detailed below.

1. Documentary research

The evaluation team analysed numerous relevant documents in this activity, such as:

- Database of implemented projects and related documents;
- The documents resulting from the activity of the different structures involved in the management and coordination of ESI funds in Romania: RAI ROP, MC ROP preparation materials, operational working group materials;
- Procedures manuals, guidelines related to KAI 5.1;
- Specialty literature (studies, analyses etc.);
- Sitewww.fonduri-ue.ro; www.inforegio.ro
- Other databases and relevant statistical data sources (NIS, Eurostat, etc.), local/regional data sources;
- Websites of the projects.

2. Semi-structured interviews (in-depth)

In-depth interviews were designed to obtain information on the impact of interventions on:

- **Cultural sector governance** (development of skills and capacities of the local public sector, project incorporation into policies and strategies) and conditions for its improvement and sustainability;
- **Site management** (skills in enhancing heritage site management and maintenance capacities, management plan, conservation plan, accreditations obtained) and conditions for its improvement and sustainability;
- **Local identity** (involving and working together with the local community and the business sector, the percentage of local visitors in total visitors) and conditions for its improvement and sustainability;
- **Local economy** (local entrepreneurs' desire to invest in cultural heritage, increase tourism, improvement of qualifications and capacity of the working population) and conditions for its improvement and sustainability;

Specifically, the investigation covered aspects regarding:

- performance of indicators;
- difficulties encountered in the contracting, monitoring and implementation process;
- lessons learned.

All interviews were face-to-face, due to travelling to all 8 development regions and at the central level. Most interviews were individual interviews, but some of them were group interviews (by turning some focus groups into group interviews). The average duration of an interview was one hour, and discussions were recorded by minutes, the report of which is presented in Annex 7 of this report, together with the interview guides used for each target group category.

3. Inquiry/opinion survey

2 opinion surveys were conducted during the evaluation, as follows:

- *At the level of the beneficiaries of financing through ROP, KAI 5.1*
- *At the level of visitors of cultural heritage sites, which benefited from ROP investments*

Given the relatively small number of projects implemented under KAI 5.1, the above above-mentioned survey referred to the project managers/persons with leading positions of the applicant institutions, from all 93 projects. The questionnaire was on-line⁸, and it included both closed and open questions.

The second opinion survey had the target group of the projects as statistical population, namely the Romanian and foreign visitors to the heritage sites that benefited from funding under the ROP KAI 5.1. It aimed at identifying the effects of the investments supported by the KAI 5.1, examining aspects regarding:

The notoriety of the heritage site

The site promotion

The level of visitor satisfaction regarding the intervention

The development of adjacent infrastructure

⁸ Through the SurveyMonkey platform www.surveymonkey.com/

The size of the visitor universe was based on a convenience sample that best describes the perceptions of intervention beneficiaries. It should be noted that the size of the total population, i.e. the total number of visitors in the financed tourism sites, is unknown. Also, there are no previous surveys that allow a clear description of the profile of respondents. That is the reason why the funded heritage sites were selected first and then visitors were selected at the site.

The selection of heritage sites aimed to cover the development regions, as well as to choose heritage objectives of different degrees of importance, according to the NIH categorization.

A sample size of 480 respondents was considered to be satisfactory to answer the research questions, namely large enough to cover the intervention sites in terms of territory, but also to describe the perceptions of respondents. For each development region, 2 heritage sites were selected, trying to apply the questionnaire to a number of 30 respondents in each of the selected locations among the beneficiaries. In the selection process, compliance with gender quotas was considered, namely a balanced distribution between men and women. For better data quality and to reduce non-response, the questionnaire management was performed face-to-face by the survey operators.

The reports for each conducted survey are presented in Annex 9 of this report.

4. Focus group/ Group interviews

The organization of focus groups was aimed at providing qualitative information in addition to that collected from other sources, relevant at regional level. Focus groups were organized in the form of a structured discussion, based on a focus group guide prepared and agreed with the previous Scientific Evaluation Committee⁹.

In the focus groups, aspects regarding all types of supported interventions (restoration, protection, conservation and consolidation) and the types of supported sites (individual buildings - monument/ museum/ heritage buildings, heritage monastery/ church etc. - or historical and cultural center of a town), as well as aspects of the complementary nature of these interventions and the potential areas to create synergies were analysed differentially.

The discussion topics included:

- The extent to which KAI 5.1 met the needs of cultural tourism
- The impact of the KAI 5.1 investments at local/ regional/ national
- Successful projects in the region
- Factors that led to the success of KAI 5.1 interventions
- Weak projects/wrong interventions
- The socio-economic impact of KAI 5.1
- Increase in the tourist attractiveness of communities in which the investments were made
- Lessons learned following the KAI 5.1, ROP 2007-2013 interventions

Overall, 42 persons took part in focus groups, from the following target groups:

- RDAs

⁹ The Scientific Evaluation Committee is an evaluation support and assistance structure designed to ensure the quality of the evaluation process

- Beneficiaries of culture/ cults institutions
- Beneficiaries of local public authorities (county/ municipalities)
- Travel agency operators offering cultural heritage sites
- Accommodation operators in the localities where interventions funded under KAI 5.1 took place.
- County culture directorates
- Local commissions of historical monuments
- Cultural associations

3 of these focus groups were transformed ad-hoc into group interviews, given the fact that such focus groups had no significant presence. In terms of methodology, invitations to participate were sent to all beneficiaries in each region, as well as to other relevant regional actors (county cultural directorates, NGOs, RDAs). However, we note a relatively low degree of interest on the part of the beneficiaries in participating in such meetings and implicitly in the evaluation process, especially since most projects were completed over 4 years ago and some of them even existed the 5-year sustainability period after the completion of the ROP-financed interventions.

The guides used in focus groups/group interviews, along with the reports of each focus group/group interview, are presented in Annexes 11 and 8, respectively, to this report.

5. Case studies

The use of case studies was aimed at obtaining qualitative information in addition to that obtained by other methods, so as to be able to refine, explain and detail certain findings resulting from other methods, and to emphasize easier examples of good practices, specific problems, specific implementation contexts, determinant factors for the success of the intervention. Case studies were conducted through: documentary research, interviews (with project managers or representatives of the beneficiaries), visits on site, direct observation.

The selection of cases was aimed at covering the following criteria:

- Regional coverage
- Coverage of all types of intervention: restoration, protection, conservation and consolidation
- Inclusion of projects to restore both individual buildings (monument/ museum/ heritage buildings, heritage monastery/ church etc.) and projects to restore the historical and cultural center of a town.
- Types of beneficiaries and projects: world cultural heritage, national cultural heritage, cultural heritage in the urban environment;

Information was collected on:

- The context of the intervention
- The effects of the intervention (including evaluation indicators)
- The factors that determined the effects
- The involvement of the concerned parties

The case studies are presented in Annex 10 of this report.

6. Nominal group

The organization of a nominal group was considered relevant to the field of local development based on cultural heritage and tourism promotion due to the fact that, in practice, they give rise to divergent opinions and involve complex issues that need to be explored in depth, therefore it is necessary to obtain more perspectives on one subject.

The nominal group was used to validate the main results of the KAI 5.1 impact evaluation and to discuss in particular the development policy recommendations. Also, the unintentional (positive or negative) effects of the KAI 5.1 interventions and their importance in the economy of the intervention were discussed in the nominal group:

- Cultural heritage resources are often over-marketed, too many visitors causing physical damage to historical sites or eroding the cultural significance of traditions and crafts through overexploitation.
- Tourists' availability to pay higher prices than the local population for basic goods and services often results in higher prices, making these goods more expensive for the community residents;
- Changes in real estate ownership often occur in economies based on tourism, because foreign investors from abroad, who are often able to pay higher prices, purchase land, buildings and local buildings.

The report related to the nominal group is presented in Annex X of this report.

7. Panel of experts

The panel of experts was formed to provide an independent and objective opinion on the validation of the evaluation results. The 5 experts who were part of the panel were selected from the fields of cultural and tourism development and policy-making. They were consulted to identify recommendations and to complete the benchmarking analysis, their contribution being useful for defining the lessons learned for designing the future policy.

The panel of experts mainly contributed to:

- examining the current and new challenges for the future development of the activity of restoration and development of cultural heritage (KAI 5.1);
- stimulating the mutual contribution of each experience in order to enrich the knowledge base for impact evaluation;
- looking for other experiences and other evaluations to be used as a benchmark;
- providing perspectives and recommendations for future development policies.

The report related to the panel of experts is presented in Annex 12 of this report.

3.2 SPECIALTY LITERATURE

The analysis of specialty literature and strategic documents is the basis for the reconstruction of the Theory of Change, with a focus on establishing the main effects of investments in the restoration and development of cultural heritage and determining how they can be evaluated by quantitative and qualitative methods.

Possible effects expected as a result of the implementation of KAI 5.1

The effects of investments in the restoration and sustainable development of cultural heritage, as well as the creation / modernisation of related infrastructures:

1. the restoration and sustainable development of cultural heritage sites;
2. creating/keeping jobs;
3. increasing the importance of cultural tourism, as a factor stimulating economic growth in the regions;
4. extending the tourist season;
5. increasing the number of tourists - by capitalizing on the local and regional cultural tourism potential on the national and international tourist market;
6. contributions for the economic and social, territorially balanced and sustainable development of Romania's regions, according to their needs and specific resources.

Factors of influence

1. Complementarity with other types of investment as a potentiating factor of the results

Assumption: Communities/ regions that, in addition to the specific investment 5.1, also benefited from investments under other KAIs, achieved enhanced results in terms of the 5.1 KAI objectives and the ROP strategic objective.

The major areas of intervention within the same Priority Axis cover the following types of actions:

- Creation/ development/ modernization of specific infrastructures for sustainable use of natural resources and to improve the quality of tourism services;
 - Promoting tourism potential and creating the necessary infrastructure to increase Romania's attractiveness as a tourism destination;
2. Complementarity with other Kea Areas of Intervention
 - The economic and financial crisis during the implementation period - a potential decrease in the capacity of KAI to achieve the committed targets with regard to the number of jobs created/ maintained.

The specialty literature offers many methodological guidance elements, both general and specific, on the following levels: impact evaluation, evaluation of health interventions, evaluation of interventions supported by the European Regional Development Fund, in the context of the Cohesion Policy. Both the EC and the Romanian authorities have conducted several relevant evaluation exercises, which allow the extraction of good practices/ lessons learned for the current evaluation.

Research shows that effective interventions require a political environment that goes beyond the sectoral approach and allows for the achievement of integrated programs. Urban development that takes cultural aspects into account is very important, and local authorities play an increasingly important role in cultural promotion. Participation, responsibility and sustainable financing mechanisms can enhance the effects of such programs.

Lessons learned from the previous programming period¹⁰ at European level allow us to extract several recommendations relevant for the future programming period:

- *Hard* investments need to be combined with *soft* investment in human resources in order to achieve added value and synergy from the funding attracted.
- Investments need to be monitored and correlated with updated strategies
 - Sectoral needs and their development need to be constantly monitored and strategic documents updated with the latest data.
 - Management Authorities and Intermediate Bodies need to work together to correctly identify the latest developments in the field of culture so as to ensure that the calls launched reflect the current situation.
- Supporting the Management Authority in selecting only projects that are supported by needs evaluation and that sufficiently demonstrate the long-term solution
 - Demonstrating that the investment responds to cultural needs and possible inefficiencies at national or, eventually, regional level.
 - Identifying trends in the area targeted by investments and assessing the extent to which the investment addresses such trends and if it provides thus a long-term solution to the addressed need.

According to EVALSED¹¹ impact evaluation should be regarded from the perspective of the contribution of a program/policy/intervention to change, and not necessarily from the perspective of long-term evolution, from the statistical perspective, where many other factors can influence a particular policy. EVALSED also mentions that impact evaluation is carried out 3 years after the completion of the programming period. In this context, it is important to mention that the implementation of projects funded under ROP 2007 - 2013, KAI 5.1 inclusively, was carried out until 31.12.2015 (according to the N+2 rule), which means that impact evaluation is recommended starting with 01.01.2019. From this perspective, we believe that this evaluation exercise was carried out at the appropriate time to identify and analyse the effects of interventions funded under ROP 2007 - 2013, KAI 5.1 inclusively, and to respond to the evaluation questions in the most appropriate way.

Also, one of the definitions of impact evaluation, according to the World Bank¹², is “an evaluation carried out some time (five to ten years) after the intervention has been completed so as to allow time for impact to appear”.

At the level of ROP 2007-2013, there were several evaluation exercises, which included the ex-ante evaluation, intermediate and ad-hoc evaluations¹³, provided by the Multiannual

¹⁰ European Commission, http://www.esifforhealth.eu/pdf/WP2_Guide_FINAL_20150211.pdf

¹¹ https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/docgener/evaluation/guide/guide_evalsed.pdf

¹²

<http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/475491468138595632/text/382680Impact1e10experience01PUBLI C1.txt>

¹³ The list of ROP evaluations 2007-2013 can be consulted here: <http://old.fonduri-ue.ro/documente-suport/56-evaluari/154-evaluare-por>

Evaluation Plan (MEP)¹⁴, and as a response to the management needs during the program implementation. The ex-post (impact) evaluation provided in MEP PO 2014-2020 adds to them.

As regards the impact evaluation for the interventions financed under KAI 5.1, we mention the existence of a previous evaluation exercise - KAI 5.1 Impact Evaluation “The restoration and sustainable development of cultural heritage, and the creation/modernization of related infrastructures” and KAI 5.3 “Promoting tourism potential and creating the necessary infrastructure to increase Romania’s attractiveness as a tourist destination”, carried out in 2015, following which relevant recommendations for the present evaluation were identified. However, as regards the exercise of KAI 5.1 impact evaluation, the previous evaluation had a series of limitations, such as the relatively low number of completed projects and the limited availability of monitoring data. Another limitation of the 2015 evaluation is that it was carried out during the implementation of ROP 2007-2013, by taking into account the completed projects, but not also the existence of a period of time between the completion of projects and the impact evaluation, which means that, in addition to the limited number of completed projects, another important methodological limitation was that not enough time had passed after completing the projects so as to allow effects to appear and, in particular, the sustainability of the appeared effects could not be evaluated.

Unlike the previous evaluation, the present evaluation thus provides more analytical depth in terms of the evaluation questions, given that the analysis includes first and foremost the entire portfolio of completed projects, being able to provide an in-depth impact analysis of the interventions financed at the level of the entire KAI 5.1 with conclusions and recommendations that have macro-level methodological validity and can be used as lessons learned for preparing the next programming period 2021-2027.

3.3 DATA COLLECTION

The collection of quantitative data in the evaluation exercise aims at the statistical and quantitative presentation of the results of the documentary research and the results of the quantitative research methods, namely of analysing the available databases and carrying out the 2 surveys. Data on the project portfolio were obtained from BE ROP, MA ROP and RDAs, and were aggregated in databases with the projects submitted, contracted and completed on KAI 5.1, as well as databases with information collected from the funding applications, funding agreements, the latest progress reports and the sustainability reports.

In addition to the above, numerous statistical data were collected from databases available on the Tempo Online website of the National Institute of Statistics.

Also as part of the quantitative research, the 2 surveys described in the previous section were conducted. As regards the survey addressed to the visitors of heritage sites

¹⁴Available at: http://old.fonduri-ue.ro/res/filepicker_users/cd25a597fd-62/Documente_Suport/Evaluari/1_EVALUARI_POR/1_pme%20por_dec2009_aprobat%20cmpor_ro.pdf

beneficiaries of KAI 5.1, the questionnaire was applied to 16 heritage objectives, two for each development region, comprising:

- 4 religious units
- 11 local public authorities
- 1 partnership between 2 ATUs

Thus, the heritage sites where the questionnaire was applied are:

Table 1 Heritage sites where questionnaire were applied on visitors

Project title	Region	Heritage type
Iași Metropolitan Assembly	NE	A
Moldovița Monastery	NE	A and UNESCO
Capidava Fortress	SE	A
“Panait Istrati” County Library	SE	B
Brâncoveanu Potlogi Assembly	SM	A
Golești Museum	SM	A
Cesianu House	BI	B
Nicolae Minovici Museum	BI	A
Sucidava Fortress	SW	A
Museum of Oltenia Craiova	SW	B
“Deva Fortress Hill” urban area	W	A and B
Radna Church and Monastery	W	A (3) and B (1)
Oradea Fortress	NW	A
The medieval fairs circuit in Northern Transylvania - Karolyi Castle in Carei, Karolyi Castle (Fortress) in Arad	NW	A
Sibiu Evangelical Church	C	A
Historical Center Eastern Route, Southern Route, Northern Route Vauban Fortification -Alba Iulia	C	-

Following this on-site survey, a total number of 480 answers were obtained, according to the sample volume set.

The on-line survey was conducted by exhaustively including all project managers listed in the databases obtained from MA ROP, resulting in a total number of 93 potential respondents.

The questionnaire response rate was rather low, given that only 23 responses were obtained, although the on-line questionnaire was preceded by telephone mobilization and successive calls back to the persons/institutions targeted, in order to reach a maximum number of respondents.

The collection of qualitative data was carried out through several research methods, which are presented below:

Focus groups

During the data collection period, 8 regional focus groups/group interviews were organized, according to the methodology above. Due to the insufficient number of participants, 3 of them, namely from the West, Center and South-West regions, were turned into group interviews.

Their development is presented below:

Table 2 Focus groups conducted

Region	No. of participants	Institutions
SW	5	RDA SV, Oltenia Monuments Association, Craiova Art Museum, DJC Dolj CC Dolj
NW	2	DJC Cluj, ASOP NV
W	3	Assoc. Save Timiș Heritage, CC Timiș, Roman Catholic Diocese of Timișoara
SE	8	Assoc. Proilavia Tourism Club, CC Buzău (3), DJC Galați, CC Brăila, RDA SE (2)
NE	10	CC Suceava, ATU Aroneanu (2), Metropolitan Church of Moldova and Bucovina (2), CC Botoșani (2), Piatra Neamț Municipality, DJC Neamț, ANTREC
SM	2	CC Dâmbovița, Topoloveni Mayor's Office
C	5	Sibiu County Tourism Agency, Mediaș Mayor's Office, RDA C, Higher Consistory, C.A. Sibiu Evangelic Parish
BI	7	RDA BI, NIH (2), ProPatrimoniu, ARCHE Association, SINAPTICA Association, APTR

Semi-structured interviews

Also for the purpose of collecting qualitative data, 18 interviews were conducted, in which 27 people participated, representatives of the main institutions involved in the KAI 5.1 management and implementation and with responsibilities in the area of interest, namely:

- 3 interviews with MA ROP representatives (Programming Directorate, Contracts Directorate, Monitoring Directorate)
- 8 interviews with monitoring officers within RDAs (1 interview in each development region)
 - 1 interview with the Administration of the National Cultural Fund
 - 2 interviews with the National Heritage Institute
 - 1 interview with the Ministry of Culture (Cultural Heritage Directorate)
 - 1 interview with the Ministry of Tourism
 - 2 interview with Beneficiaries of the KAI 5.1 investments

Case studies

The above mentioned interviews were supplemented by 7 case studies, almost one each in each development region, except for the South-East region. The analysed projects were those in the table below.

Table 3 Case studies

SMIS code	Project name	Beneficiary	Region	County	Heritage type
15796	Cesianu House consolidation, restoration and conservation	Bucharest Municipality ATU	BI		Group B
15876	Arrangement of Golești Museum Assembly - Rehabilitation, conservation and enhancement	Argeș County ATU	SM	Argeș	Group A
1971	Rehabilitation of Historical Center Eastern Route, Southern Route, Northern Route Vauban Fortification -Alba Iulia - access ways, lighting and specific urban furniture	Alba Iulia Municipality ATU	C	Alba	-
16543	Development of cultural tourism in the West Region by renovating and including Radna Church and Monastery into the tourist circuit	Roman Catholic Diocese of Timișoara	W	Timiș	A (3) and B (1)
10904	Tourist valorisation of Iași Metropolitan Assembly	Metropolitan Church of Moldova and Bucovina	NE	Iași	Group A
1590	Revitalization of Oradea fortress for introduction into the tourist circuit. Oradea fortress European cultural touristic complex - stage I	Oradea Municipality ATU	NW	Bihor	Group A
3767	Consolidation, restoration and modernization at the history - archaeology department of the Museum of Oltenia Craiova	Dolj County ATU	SW	Craiova	Group B

The collected information was summarized in a sheet of each project, in a unitary format, and a report is available in Annex 10 to the evaluation report.

3.4 LIMITATIONS

The methodological limitations that have the most significant effects on the evaluation team's ability to answer effectively to the evaluation questions are presented below (Table 4), accompanied by actions taken to mitigate their influence on the process.

Table 4 Limitations

Manifested risks	Resolution method
Data accessibility - Difficult access to administrative data at IO ROP level (funding applications, progress and sustainability reports, availability for interviews, for participation in focus groups). The evaluation involves an additional effort on the part of stakeholders, starting with those at the central level and up to the regional and local level. This additional effort is identified in the need to provide the necessary data to the evaluation team, data which is not always collected, archived and aggregated according to the responsibilities of each stakeholder. Without generalizing, difficulties were encountered in collecting data at regional level, with significant delays from some regions in providing this data, and the reluctance of others to provide it archived. These difficulties generated delays in carrying out other methods, which depended on the primary data collection and related documentary research.	This risk was partially limited by the involvement of the team of experts, by direct and repeated communication with the relevant stakeholders, by overcoming communication barriers and by performing a proper management of expectations and limiting as much as possible the effort made by the authorities responsible for collecting data. Where data collection from primary sources was not possible, its identification from other sources available to the public was attempted.
Data quality - Inconsistencies between information collected from different sources, such as between the centralized monitoring data provided by MA ROP and the data provided for in the funding contracts and applications, and data provided by beneficiaries in the sustainability reports. For instance, beneficiaries reported different program indicators due to change of the definition of certain indicators during project implementation, which made it difficult and, in some cases, impossible to aggregate them	The analysis was done by corroborating/ cross-checking the various databases made available and validating them with the stakeholders, including with the on-line information available. Following consultations with BE ROP, where differences were found, it was decided to include the data from CF, contracts and reports in the analysis, and to process them in a project portfolio centralizer, developed within the project.
Data accessibility - Difficult access to the administrative data of cultural and heritage institutions, poor quality of data	The effects of this risk were only partially mitigated by applying the survey among the managers of projects benefited from funding. The low response rate adversely affects the quality of the information collected.
The low rate of participation in focus groups, despite all efforts to send invitations to all	Focus groups with insufficient participants were turned into group interviews.

beneficiaries in each region, as well as other relevant stakeholders - DCJ	
Low response rate to the online survey.	The effects of this risk were mitigated by extending the period for conducting surveys and calling back to mobilize the target groups, in order to increase the number of responses.
The short time available for evaluation, after receiving the requested data and information.	The evaluation team made every effort to meet the required deadlines, by supplementing the number of experts and the support team.
The quality of the data collected during the sustainability period, especially with regard to the number of tourists indicator, which each beneficiary reports according to their own understanding and which was impossible to aggregate	The use of alternative data sources for case studies, surveys, and focusing efforts to collect as many qualitative data as possible.

The biggest limitation of this evaluation is considered to be the limited understanding or non-understanding of the role of evaluation in the public policy ecosystem, which is why we consider there is a low rate of response/participation in the application of the methods, but also for the difficulties encountered in data collection, a limitation that the evaluation team constantly tried to mitigate by constant communication with all the actors involved and explaining the importance, purpose of the evaluation, and how each stakeholder can benefit from an evaluation exercise, in order to base his decision on solid information from the evaluation, or in order to better understand how effective was the way money was spent, what has the effect and what not, which are the interventions that have results and impact. We consider that a collective effort is needed to create and develop the evaluation culture at central/ regional/ local level.

4. ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

In order to give clear and precise answers to the evaluation questions, according to the agreed methodology, we divided the first evaluation question into two parts: (1) What is the net effect of funds intervention on cultural heritage and related infrastructures? And (2) What are the factors that determined the net effect? The third question is well formulated and will receive the answers in the form in which it was formulated (3): What type of intervention has produced results, for whom, and under what circumstances?

4.1 What is the net effect of funds intervention on cultural heritage and related infrastructures?

The net effect of KAI 5.1 can be better understood depending on and analysing the following evaluation dimensions:

- The status (output) of program indicators;
- The relevance of funding for beneficiaries and the development needs of the Regions;
- The effectiveness of funding (*the extent to which KAI 5.1 met its objectives*);
- The efficiency (significant interventions);
- The impact (*local impact, regional impact, national impact*).
- The unexpected effects;

The Priority Axis (PA) 5 of ROP aimed at the sustainable development and promotion of tourism, identified as a priority of regional development, in the National Regional Development Strategy prepared based on the Regional Development Plans and the National Strategic Reference Framework 2007-2013, given the tourism potential in all regions. Under PA5, through KAI 5.1, with an initial indicative allocation of EUR 235.40 million¹⁵, projects were funded for the conservation, restoration, consolidation, rehabilitation, protection of historical monuments. Through the calls launched under this KAI, a total number of 93 projects were funded, of which 89 completed projects, implemented between 2010 - 2016, with a total value of Lei 1.65 billion.

The status of program indicators

As regards the indicators for this KAI, monitored during the program implementation, the output indicator was reached at 89% and the result indicator was exceeded by 404%. Not meeting the *output indicator* is not a problem in terms of KAI 5.1 impact evaluation, the 89 implemented projects being sufficient to produce regional impact.

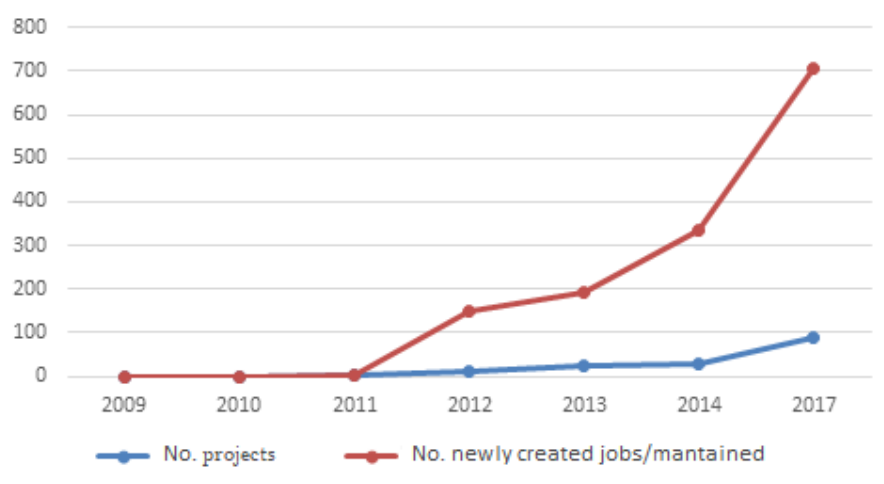
¹⁵ According to the Applicant's Guide related to KAI 5.1, available at http://old.fonduri-ue.ro/res/filepicker_users/cd25a597fd-62/Finanțări/POR/DML-5.1/Ghid.Consolidat-DML-5.1.pdf

Table 5 KAI 5.1 indicators

Indicators ¹⁶		2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2017	2018	Total
<i>Output indicators</i>										
Tourism projects (no.)	Achieved	0	0	1	10	22	27	89	89 ¹⁷	
	Target									100
<i>Outcome indicators</i>										
Newly created/maintained jobs (no.)	Achieved	0	0	2	149	191	336	705		
	Target									200

The outcome indicator, the number of jobs newly created/ maintained, increases exponentially (Figure 3) with the start and progress of project implementation. In 2018, two years after the project implementation was completed, it reached 808 jobs created in the field of cultural heritage (404% of the initial estimated value), thus partially demonstrating the sustainability of projects funded under KAI 5.1 (Figure 3).

Figure 3 Evolution of output and outcome indicators of KAI 5.1



There was a confusion, also signalled by the previous evaluation report, that the indicator “no. of newly created jobs” can be understood differently from the indicator “no. of maintained jobs”, making the understanding and reporting of beneficiaries difficult, especially in the monitoring reports.

The relevance of funding for beneficiaries and the development needs of the Regions

The projects financed under KAI 5.1 responded, depending on the specific and potential of the regions, in different ways to the needs of cultural tourism. In the absence of national

¹⁶ Source: Final Implementation Report (2017)

¹⁷ As at 30.09.2018, 93 contracted projects were recorded, of which 89 completed and the remaining 4 are non-operational

and regional strategies (at the programming stage of the ROP 2007-2013) dedicated to cultural tourism, or generally the situation of the national built heritage, it was difficult to prioritize at the level of program interventions.

There were significant differences in how the Program responded to needs in the eight regions. These differences are related to the typology of the cultural sites being rehabilitated. In some regions, one can note a good selection of interventions depending on the historical importance of the heritage objectives and their contribution to cultural tourism (North-East, Center, West Regions) while in other regions, the selection of interventions did not address the most relevant sites in the region (North-West, Bucharest-Ilfov Regions).

The main cause of this situation was the funding method that favoured beneficiaries having better information and administrative capacities (access to advisory services), their ability playing a key role.

The method of selecting the projects that were funded - first come, first served - favoured beneficiaries with the knowledge and skills to write projects/ attract European funding and did not favour a selection of funding based on historical/ heritage value or the tourism potential of the funded sites. This aspect was mitigated in the historical regions of the Old Kingdom but was strongly felt in Banat and Transylvania.

KAI 5.1 responded to a huge financing need in the field of cultural and historical heritage rehabilitation, project beneficiaries or representatives of implementing or partner institutions, repeated altogether that all these monuments “had no other chance of being rehabilitated and consolidated, as there have been no funding alternatives”, government resources being very limited, as well as other resources or other smaller funding programs (e.g. cross-border cooperation funds, Norwegian funds).

Many of the rehabilitated structures were closed or out of the tourist circuits at the start of the projects, but they are now open and accessible.

Overall, with some exceptions, it can be concluded that the use of the KAI 5.1 funds did not primarily pursue tourism sets, but rather conserving, consolidating, rehabilitating cultural heritage, the tourism component being a secondary one. At the time of the financial allocation, but also at the time of the selection of projects, there has been no national methodology of favouring different tourist destinations based on a strategy. Such strategic documents also lacked at regional level. KAI 5.1 had no funding preconditions based on a classification of sites in terms of tourism potential: The National Territory Arrangement Plan (PATN), Section VI - TOURIST AREAS (Law No. 190 of 26 May 2009) appeared after the ROP programming exercise was completed and was not taken into consideration when ROP projects funding was decided. As far as the tourism potential is concerned, the PATN, section VI, divides the localities in Romania into three types: (1) very high potential, (2) high potential and (3) without potential. *The tourism experts* consulted recommend, in the future, for this type of funding, the introduction of preconditions favouring the sites with

high tourism potential (on the principle that “it is elementary the 14th - 15th century churches attract more tourists than a memorial house in the town of Tecuci”).

During the Program implementation, there were misunderstandings regarding the KAI 5.1 “mission” in the sense that tourism policy experts consider that the ROP did not effectively met tourism objectives in the previous financial year, while cultural heritage experts consider the situation is more nuanced, “by the way it was designed, by results, it partially missed the mission”. Tourism practitioners and experts consider that the Program was not properly calibrated to have significant effects on tourism, while practitioners and experts in the field of cultural heritage considered that many sites of great heritage importance could not benefit from conservation work due to the fact that they are not a tourist destination.

The effectiveness of funding (*the extent to which KAI 5.1 met its objectives*);

In our case, the effectiveness, as a criterion of ex-post evaluation of a funding program, must respond to the question “*To what extent did KAI 5.1 meet its objectives?*”.

The specific objectives of this key area of intervention were:

1. Increasing the importance of tourism and culture, as a factor stimulating economic growth in the regions, complying with the principles of sustainable development and environmental protection;

As regards this objective (formulated vaguely, not sufficiently specific and difficult to quantify), the research carried out show that KAI 5.1 contributed to increase the importance of tourism, as a factor driving economic growth, but the situation differs a lot from one region to another, depending on (1) the volume of funding, (2) the size, the type of projects and the success of works execution, (3) the tourism tradition of each objective, the existence of tourist circuits.

As regards the economic and touristic dimension of this evaluation, it is worth noting the success of projects that targeted cultural heritage sites of fortress type (Suceava, Alba Iulia, Deva, Oradea, Piatra Neamț) and monastery type (Maria Radna din Arad, Moldovița, Sucevița, Dragomirna in Suceava). Also, the ensembles of the Metropolitan Church of Iasi and the Patriarchate in Bucharest, which benefited from massive funding, contributed significantly to pilgrimage tourism.

2. Extending the tourist season;

For this objective (also formulated vaguely, not sufficiently specific and difficult to quantify), we cannot establish causal links between the funding under KAI 5.1 and the evolution of the tourist season, especially since it was highly dependent on KAI 5.2 as well. Creation, development, modernization of tourism infrastructure for capitalization of natural resources and to improve the quality of tourism services and 5.3. Promoting tourism potential and creating the necessary infrastructure to increase Romania's attractiveness as a tourism destination.

3. Increasing the number of tourists by capitalizing on the local and regional cultural tourism potential on the national and international tourist market.

Following the analysis of the implementation and sustainability reports, all beneficiaries reported increases, some significant, and a causal link between the rehabilitated sites and the increase in the number of tourists could easily be identified. On the whole, it can be concluded that this objective has been partially achieved and in some situations, the estimated expected results have been exceeded several times. Unfortunately, at the level of regions, or even within the same region, different methods of collecting and presenting data in the sustainability reports were used (some beneficiaries used nominal values, other beneficiaries used percentage values, without specifying the nominal value), which makes it impossible to accurately quantify the increase in the number of tourists in nominal values, as well as the percentage estimates. There were **significant differences** in tourism potential between the heritage sites subject to funding, with the differences between the lowest value identified - 300 tourists per year and the highest value identified - 154,700 tourists per year. In the case of sites that can be visited/ seen without visitors being quantifiable (e.g. the historical center of a city, the Triumph Arch in Bucharest), no data can be presented.

Impact

Local impact

Most interviewed groups consider that the interventions funded under KAI 5.1 generally had an impact at **local** level, although it varied according to the type of projects and heritage sites that benefited from specific works. The local impact has been characterized by the following features:

- Benefits of small local businesses (pensions, restaurants, small manufactures);
- Use of local workforce for various works;
- Increased attractiveness of the locality, as a tourist destination (with or without accommodation);
- Increased number of employees in the cultural heritage field (direct outcome).

In some cases, (e.g. Alba Iulia, Radna, Sălașu de Sus) the projects generated development. As the 2007-2013 financial framework overlapped with the 2009 economic crisis, some projects acted as *“a little development engine: People come, work, generate exchanges, get accommodation. The projects have brought surplus”* as the mayor of a locality that benefited from funding under KAI 5.1 said. This conclusion, that the projects initiated earlier helped small communities during the economic crisis, was strengthened in most focus groups conducted within the framework of the evaluation exercise

A particular form of local impact, identified by cultural heritage experts, is the impact that interventions (works) and commissioning, while attracting tourists, is the **impact on local identity**. In fact, as a result of the attention given to the heritage site that was neglected for a long time, the local community started to become aware of and to value the heritage unit, experiencing a feeling of pride generated by the existence of the given heritage. In this context, the actions of promoting each site, carried out by MA ROP with the involvement of actor Victor Rebenciuc as a storyteller, are worth mentioning.

The impact on the community and on local identity is inversely proportional to the size of the locality. Thus, in Bucharest, the project rehabilitation had no perceptible impact, but in smaller towns or communes, the impact on the local identity was repeatedly emphasized by the participants in the focus groups organized in the eight regions: *“In Piatra Neamț, at Curtea Domnească, the first tourists were local tourists”* declared the representative of the

culture commission of Neamț county. Some heritage sites were effectively taken out of misery and oblivion and put on the tourist map or reintegrated better into community life: *“There were chickens and tomatoes and cucumbers in the church courtyard before, now there are tourists and people also come from other localities to get married in our church”* (Parish Priest of Saint Nicolae Aroneanu Church.)

Regional impact

The regional impact is more difficult to achieve and coherent strategic interventions are required at regional level. The observable regional impact is mainly due to major projects and less due to synergy between the financed projects. If a region has benefited from major projects, generally financed with amounts higher than Lei 35-40 million, the regional impact is perceptible, some of these attracting tourists from national and even international level. The regional impact of ROP KAI 5.1 is mostly felt at the level of the North-East Region (with the largest financial amount) and is due to projects such as “Tourist valorisation of the Metropolitan Assembly Iasi”, “Rehabilitation of the Fortress of Suceava and its protection area”, the interventions from the monasteries of Dragomirna, Sucevița, Moldovița.

The regional impact has been bigger in regions that have been able to alternate touristic sites with historical value, but also relatively imposing, with the existence of regional sites and rare at the same time, at national and even European level. It is the case of the Center Region, that attracts tourists from Transylvania, but also from Bucharest or other even countries, with a combination of attractions such as fortresses (Rupea, Alba Iulia) and fortified Evangelical monasteries, all in a natural environment favourable to eco-tourism.

National impact

In terms of national impact, this can be perceived especially at the level of solving emergencies and saving inherent value heritage assets, KAI 5.1 providing the opportunity for significant investments, 89 more complex or simpler projects have contributed significantly to extending the life span of numerous national heritage sites.

As regards tourism (increasing the tourist attraction capacity and contributions to local/regional economies), the program impact cannot be assessed at national level. However, large projects, supported by investments and adjacent interventions of LPA or cults, have the capacity to attract tourists both nationally and internationally. This is the case of several rehabilitated sites in the North-East area, such as the Metropolitan Church of Iasi, the Fortress of Suceava, the 14th - 15th century Monasteries included in the Unesco heritage. In the West Region, we mention the Maria Radna Monastery, which attracts numerous tourists from Hungary, in the Alba Iulia Fortress Central Region, in the Bucharest-Ilfov Region, the Patriarchal Palace.

One of the issues in the field of tourism are the links between the project beneficiaries and tourism operators: some destinations are not sufficiently well known and are not promoted by operators either nationally or internationally. This problem is also caused by the lack of a clear strategy in the field of tourism, at the central level.

Overall, regional funding has ensured a good national distribution of funds, as can be seen from the map in Figure 4. However, it should be emphasized that this balanced distribution reflects a strategic approach of defensive type (reduction of the number of weaknesses/

mitigating threats) and not an offensive one, which not only builds on strengths and opportunities, capitalizing the natural/ heritage advantages that some regions, not all, own.

Figure 4 visual chart of projects funded under the KAI 5.1



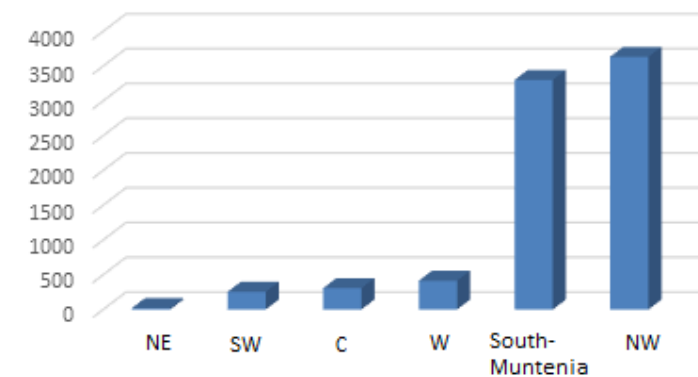
The efficiency (significant interventions)

To understand the effectiveness of the interventions, we conducted a benchmarking analysis on projects. Thus, we selected projects with the highest budget (massive and complex) and cultural heritage sites that attracted/ attract the largest number of tourists and benefited from funding.

In order to understand the efficiency of large interventions/ projects (complex and with important financial allocations), we divided the amounts that the applicants received to the annual number of tourists reported (Figure 5). As expected, the project dedicated to Iasi Metropolitan Assembly, which benefits from a large number of tourists, demonstrates good efficiency (the lower the project budget/ number of tourists ratio, the higher the efficiency).

The effectiveness of interventions in relation to the number of tourists benefiting from heritage sites.

Figure 5 The effectiveness of interventions in relation to the number of tourists benefiting from heritage sites.



Region ¹⁸	Lei/tourist
North East	20
South West	254
Center	307
West	414
South Muntenia	3300
North West	3632

Significant differences are noted between the efficiency of large projects, the projects of Oradea Municipality / North West (Revitalization of Oradea fortress for introduction into the tourist circuit. Oradea Fortress, an European touristic cultural assembly - stage I) and of the Dâmbovița County Council / South-Muntenia (Restoration and sustainable development of the cultural heritage, as well as creation/modernization of related infrastructures in the area of the Potlogi Brâncoveanu assembly) being ineffective (at this moment) from the economic point of view.

To understand even better “what types of interventions produce results¹⁹“, we selected from each region the projects with the largest reported number of tourists, noting that interventions with the highest budgets not always overlap the sites with the largest number of tourists.

In order to make the projects easier to understand and locate, we will not use the full name/ title of the project, but the popular name of the heritage site and the county where it is located, where this is not obvious. The analysis does not include the most important projects in the Bucharest Ilfov region - Patriarchal Palace - because it has reported no data on the number of visitors. In this situation, efficiency (investments/ in relation to the number of tourists²⁰) also reveals the relevance of the selected heritage site and consequently the relevance of the Program.

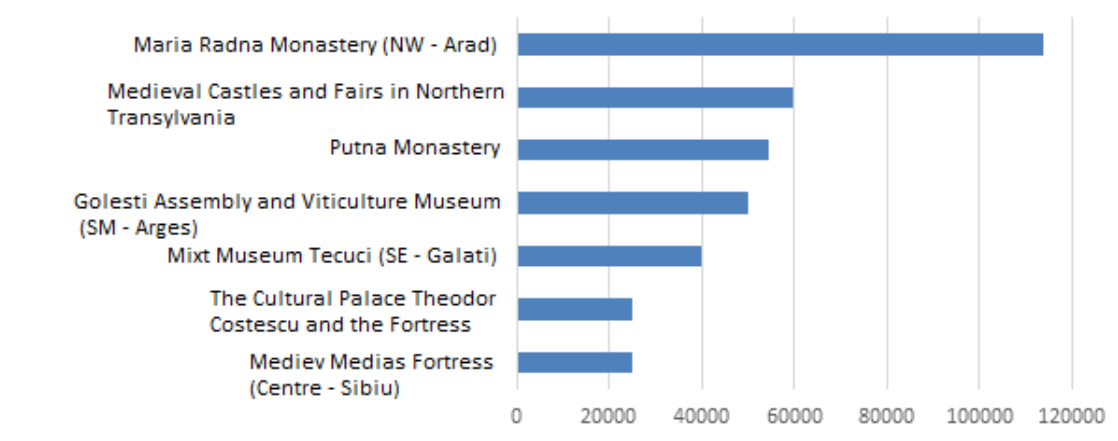
¹⁸ Significant projects in the BI and South-East regions, which did not report data on the number of visitors, are not included in the analysis.

¹⁹ Evaluation Question no. 3: *What type of intervention produces results, for whom, and under in what context?*

²⁰ There is not necessarily an exclusive cause between the investments under KAI 5.1 and the number of tourists. The number of tourists can also be determined by historical causes and could be large in the absence of investments.

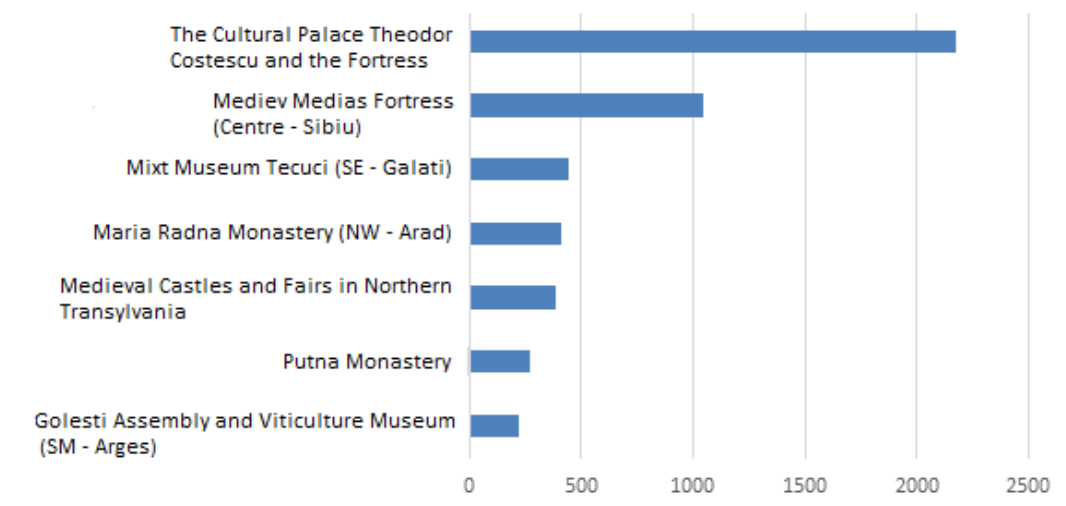
In this context, one can clearly note the economic efficiency and relevance of interventions such as those at the Maria Radna Monastery (Arad), the Medieval Castles and Fairs in Northern Transylvania and 14th and 15th century Monasteries in Moldova and Bucovina, which are the types of cultural heritage sites with significant tourism potential (Figure 6).

Figure 6 Comparison between the projects with the largest number of tourists attracted, one for each region.



In order to understand the efficiency of projects with the largest number of tourists (not necessarily complex and with important financial allocations, but efficient), we divided the amounts that the applicants received to the annual reported number of tourists (Figure 7). As expected, the project dedicated to Iasi Metropolitan Assembly, which benefits from a large number of tourists, demonstrates good efficiency, the lower the project budget/number of tourists ratio, the higher the efficiency: Th. Costescu Palace and the Severin Fortress are inefficient, but the Golești Assembly and Putna Monastery are efficient.

Figure 7 Comparison between the most efficient projects, one for each region.



Unexpected effects

The program has increased the visibility of heritage sites and has helped to raise awareness of the need for rehabilitation and inclusion tourist and cultural circuits.

As a result of renovations, the interest in the symbolic space offered by cultural heritage sites has increased, generating an increase in demands and the number of activities taking place inside them: thematic workshops, events with specific themes (such as history, archaeology, cave painting, photography and painting exhibitions), festivals, plays, etc. KAI 5.1 contributing to improving cultural life in localities where it funded specific cultural heritage interventions.

In terms of unexpected negative effects (reported by several beneficiaries):

- following the rehabilitation of a museum, a fortress, etc. the number of heritage items increased, therefore, at this moment, the museum deals with a discrepancy between the exhibition area and the storage area for the heritage items;
- Obvious visual discrepancies have appeared between different parts of an assembly, more exactly between those that benefited from investment/works and those that did not, reducing the attractiveness of non-renovated parts (thus, put in the shade).

4.2 What are the factors that determined the net effect?

The factors, identified by applying the data collection and analysis methods, that determined the net effect are the following:

- The volume of funds used, by Development Region (allocations and reallocations);
- The type and capacity of beneficiaries (LPA: CC, municipality, commune or cults);
- The understanding and management of unintended effects;
- The impact on beneficiaries;
- The implementation of innovative projects;
- Implementation issues (*administrative capacity of structures subordinated to the Ministry of Culture, issues related to archaeological discharge, technical problems*)

- specific to the consolidation and restoration of historical monuments);
- Structural issues in thematic area of KAI 5.1 (*Operators/suppliers of services and works, Lack of qualified human resources*);
- The Development Region where the projects were carried out

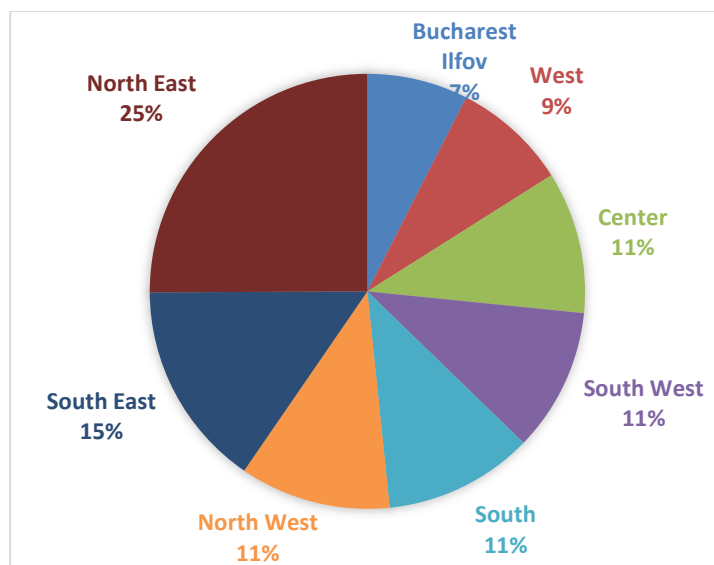
We will detail below the identified factors, analysing the way in which they determined the net effect of KAI 5.1.

The volume of funds used, by Development Region (allocations and reallocations)

KAI 5.1 was the most massive, coherent and concentrated public intervention programmed over the past 30 years to strengthen, rehabilitate, preserve and to give back to the cultural circuit a variety of cultural and historic heritage sites. Although there have been deficiencies in both programming, as well as in the project selection method, responding to huge financing needs, the KAI 5.1 has produced a net impact on some communities at regional and/ or local level.

Figure 6 shows that the development regions benefited from different funding rates, the differences being significant, with the North-East Region obtaining about 3 times more funds than the Bucharest-Ilfov region, and the South-East region about 2 times more funds than the Bucharest-Ilfov region, which is the region that received the least funds.

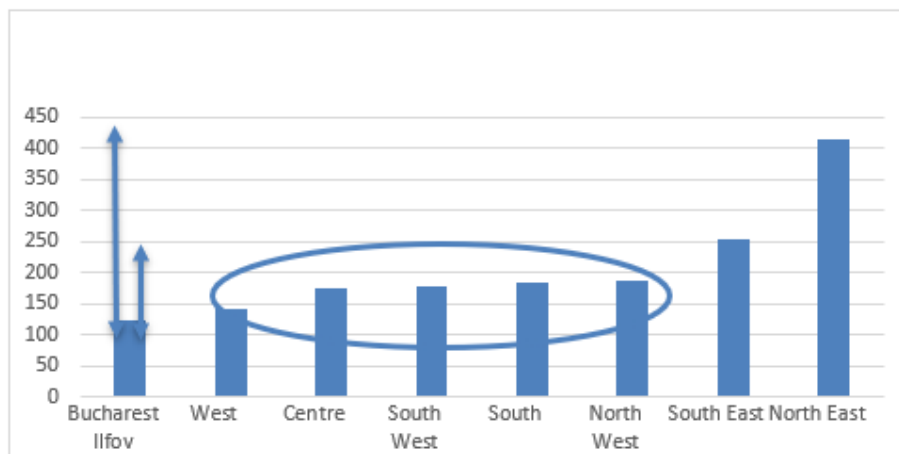
Figure 8 Distribution of KAI 5.1 funding by region, upon completion of projects, in percentages



It is normal that the impact of KAI 5.1 is relatively proportional to the level of financial intensity of each region. The North-East region clearly performed better in comparison with the rest of the development regions, both in terms of value and number of financed projects, but also through their impact on communities and at regional level, confirmed by the qualitative data that was gathered.

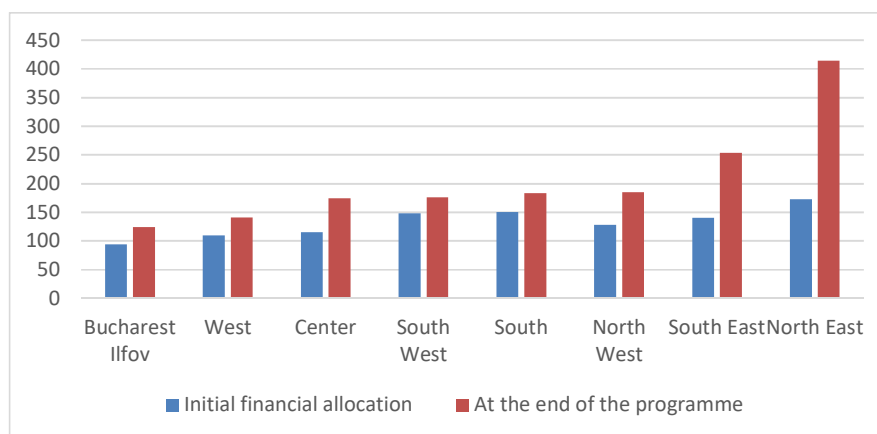
Most regions (West, Center, South-West, South, North-West) had projects with comparable funding (Figure 9), situated around the average value (for the mentioned regions, after eliminating extremes) of EUR 172 million.

Figure 9 Distribution of KAI 5.1 funding by region, upon completion of projects



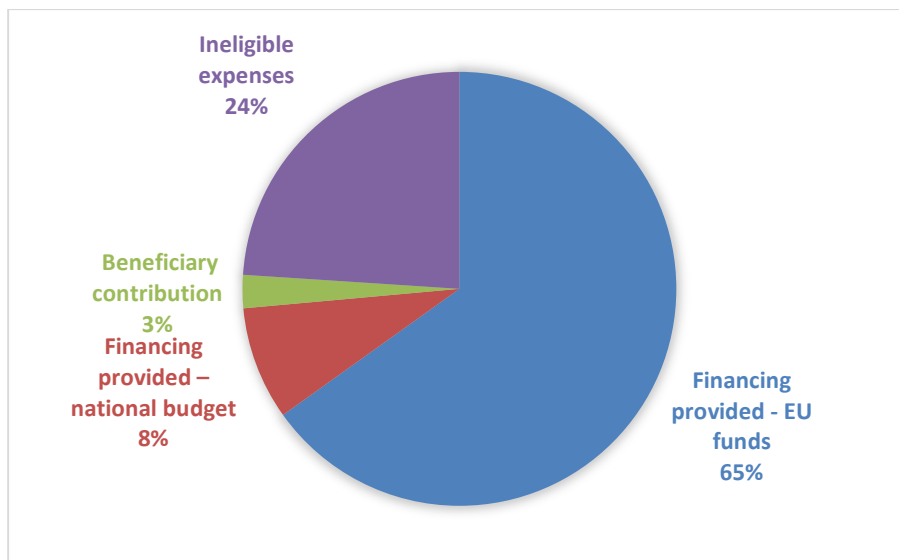
The differences between the initial financial allocation by region (programmed balanced) and the financial executions of projects aggregated by regions (orange) are only partly explained by the fact that the latter include (as shown in Figure 10, in orange) the funding granted - national budget, own contributions of beneficiaries and non-eligible expenditure.

Figure 10 Differences between the initial financial allocation and total funds received by the regions at the end of the program, in million lei



The rest of the differences are explained by the financial reallocations made during the Program implementation, but also by a larger contribution of the beneficiaries in the regions ahead: North-East and South-East.

Figure 11 Distribution of funds received by the KAI 5.1 projects, by type of funding

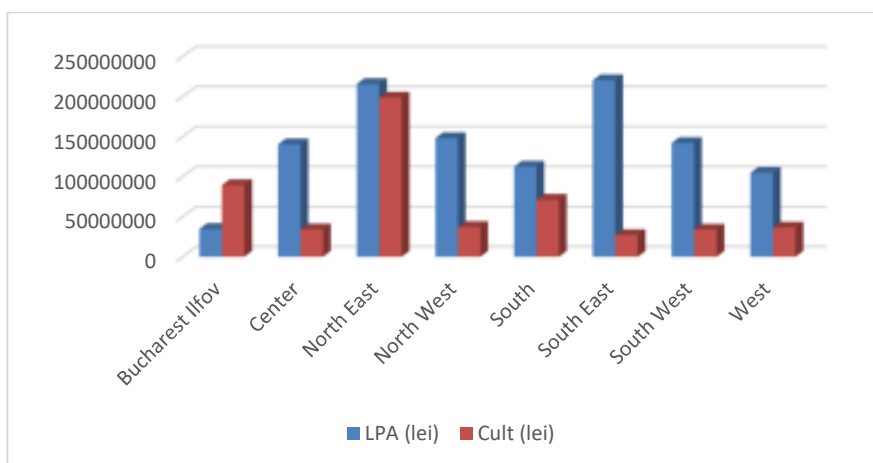


Overall, KAI 5.1, through the projects funded, benefited from a significant amount, of more than Lei 1.65 billion, which places this public intervention in the field of rehabilitation of built cultural heritage as the most consistent and concentrated public intervention in the last 30 years in this field.

The type and capacity of beneficiaries (LPA: CC, municipality, commune or cults)

Regarding the distribution of funds by types of beneficiaries and regions, it can be noticed that LPA is the main beneficiary of KAI 5.1, 68% of the funds being used for projects carried out by them and about one third by Cults, namely 32%.

Figure 12 Distribution of funds by type of beneficiaries and region

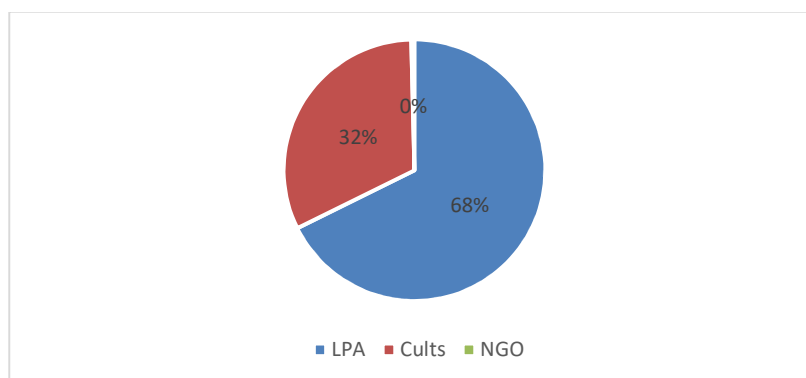


As shown by Figure 12, the Bucharest - Ilfov Region is the only region where the cults received more funds, this being due to the project "Restoration, consolidation and protection of the Patriarchate Palace Bucharest funded with a considerable amount". The cults also received

considerable funds for the cultural sites in the North-East Region, given the rich monastic heritage of the region.

Non-governmental organizations have received no funds, with an exception in the South-East region, where a non-governmental organization carried out activities of 6,319,249.28 (less than 1% of the financial envelope of KAI 5.1) in a project that was carried out in partnership.

Figure 13 Distribution of funds by type of beneficiaries, total



The understanding and management of unintended effects

The “Disney Effect” is used by specialists in the conservation of cultural heritage as a depreciative reference on consolidation/ rehabilitation works that do not comply with (1) the traditional methods used in restoration works, (2) the original appearance and (3) the conservation project. This effect has mainly two causes. The first one is intentional, even since design, certain elements, some of them related, are exaggerated to increase the heritage site spectacularity, aiming at increasing its attractiveness. The second one occurs at the time of execution, when various constraints (of time, lack of materials, poor execution) are likely to affect the original appearance. In the projects funded by KAI 5.1, the interviewed specialists indicated such situations in the projects regarding works at the ancient fortress of Capidava, which one of the interviewed experts called “a restoration failure” (South-East), but also the Rupea and Alba-Iulia (Center) fortresses, the Royal Court and the Seat Fortress (North-East), with this limited effect manifested in the latter.

In the case of sites located in the rural area, it is important to preserve the authenticity of the connection with the landscape and the natural environment. Works that contain modern technology elements located visibly (e.g. the insulated glazing at the Rupea fortress) diminish the effect of authenticity.

As regards the impact of the *Disney* effect on the tourist attractiveness of sites, there is no correlation: “sites can be tourism successes even when they are professional failures. Examples may range from an improperly evaluated archaeological site, which is then erased by rearrangement, to designing a wrong concept or a poor reproduction, but overall, the tourism or economic impact is positive, great” (Cultural heritage expert, Bucharest).

There were also very good restoration works, such as the Dragomirna Church (North-East), the Reformed Church on Ulița Lupilor in Cluj and others.

Impact on beneficiaries

Following the implementation of the projects, the beneficiaries' capacity to design and implement interventions on cultural heritage sites, both from European sources and from other sources of financing, has increased. In this respect, especially at the LPA level, the beneficiaries' capacity to act strategically increased, increasing strategic coherence at regional policy level and programs.

All beneficiaries which implemented projects for the benefit of museums and most beneficiaries, in general, have increased their heritage management capacity by displaying exhibits in their own conditions, to the conservation standards imposed by Western practices, improving their maintenance capacity by following specific instructions both in the field of built heritage and of exhibits (although the latter were not the subject of the KAI 5.1 funding).

Regarding the capacities of the beneficiaries, for the vast majority of them, there are poor marketing and promotion capacities in terms of tourism and their introduction into circuits of some tourism operators. Also, because two thirds of the interventions that have benefited from the funding are in the direct management of State institutions (County Councils or Local Councils), there is a very low level of economic valorisation, by setting up commercial spaces (restaurants, souvenir shops, etc.) although many of the evaluated projects have already exited the limitations imposed by the provisions classifying them as *income generating* projects.

A positive result of the program is the restoration of the monastery museums inside the churches, thus limiting irreparable losses, which are now managed according to conservation standards.

Innovative projects

The church "St. Nicolae" from Aroneanu, Iasi County holds a technological novelty, being placed on seismic isolators, its displacement caused by earthquakes (in centimetres over the years) being monitored by satellite. The church has become a destination for architects and builders interested in this technological innovation, both in Romania and abroad.

Implementation problems

Administrative capacity problems of public institutions

The culture committees within the Ministry of Culture rarely met, which delayed approvals and project implementation.

Culture committees at national/local level²¹

Culture committees have the role of endorsing projects that involve works and interventions on heritage sites and of assessing whether the interventions complied with the standards included in the approved design documents. During the implementation of KAI 5.1, there

²¹ There are 12 cultural heritage committees organized at local level

was a systemic lack of capacity of these committees to fulfil their tasks, significantly delaying endorsement and, consequently, the start of works.

Locally, these committees do not also fulfil the role of verifying and evaluating, countersigning the works taking-over documents, as the county committees, under-financed and lacking sufficient specialists often helped to verify that the works comply with the specific execution standards of the cultural heritage.

Moreover, from the procedural and institutional point of view, there are no audit mechanisms: the monuments committee does not monitor works and has contractual relations with the construction sites. Generally, the representatives of the local committees do not travel either because they cannot handle the work volumes and this work is not remunerated.

Problems related to archaeological discharge

Archaeological discharge²² is an inherent, preliminary and mandatory stage before the execution on heritage sites, especially those within historical sites.

The archaeological discharge is a procedure for finding whether a land where the archaeological heritage was identified may or may not be restored for current human activities. It must be legally imposed by authorities through the urban planning certificate issued for works.

There were several projects that were delayed by the fact that the designers/ beneficiaries neglected this legal obligation, did not schedule it among the project activities and did not provide budget for appropriate archaeological works (of preventive type) in the early stages, in order to be able to receive quickly the archaeological discharge.

Technical problems specific to the consolidation and restoration of historical monuments

Interventions on historical monuments cannot be planned rigorously because they can contain problems that cannot be identified in the design stage and which, as a rule, generate high costs in the execution stage (e.g. the Reformed Church on Ulița Lupilor in Cluj, the Oltenia Museum Craiova, and others). Unfortunately, these costs could not be classified as eligible expenditure. In the case of beneficiaries with adequate financial capacity (county councils, etc.), these problems were overcome more easily, being borne from their own budgets. In the case of beneficiaries with smaller financial capacity, these problems led to delays in the execution of works and project delays.

Structural issues in thematic area of KAI 5.1 (specialised economic operators and human resources)

One of the existing problems of KAI 5.1 (there are differences from one region to another) was the identification of economic operators with technical capabilities for restoration and conservation work. Although there are specialists, graduates of higher education in the fields required for restoration/ conservation works, they work individually, not together with economic agents.

²² Ordinance no. 43 of 30 January 2000 on the protection of archaeological heritage and the declaration of archaeological sites as areas of national interest

Even if things were good in terms of the project management teams in the eight regions, except for the Center and North-East regions, there were big problems in identifying technical experts and craftsmen specializing in traditional handicraft works to be hired and to perform the necessary works.

As far as national rules are concerned, the certificate required for specialists in restoration works was not held by the craftsmen/ artisans who knew traditional working methods. There is a real problem in this field, as the current educational offer of the arts and crafts schools does not cover the existing needs in the restoration works market.

Cultural heritage regulations require a double certification (ISC and the Ministry of Culture) in order to obtain the right of interventions on built cultural heritage sites, managed as site supervisors. Also, there are few technical supervisors of the execution of works in most regions.

The lack of specific architecture specialists, restorers, heritage managers, restoration engineers, designers has led to delayed tender procedures or tender procedures not providing for a set of necessary specific skills because there were no bidders.

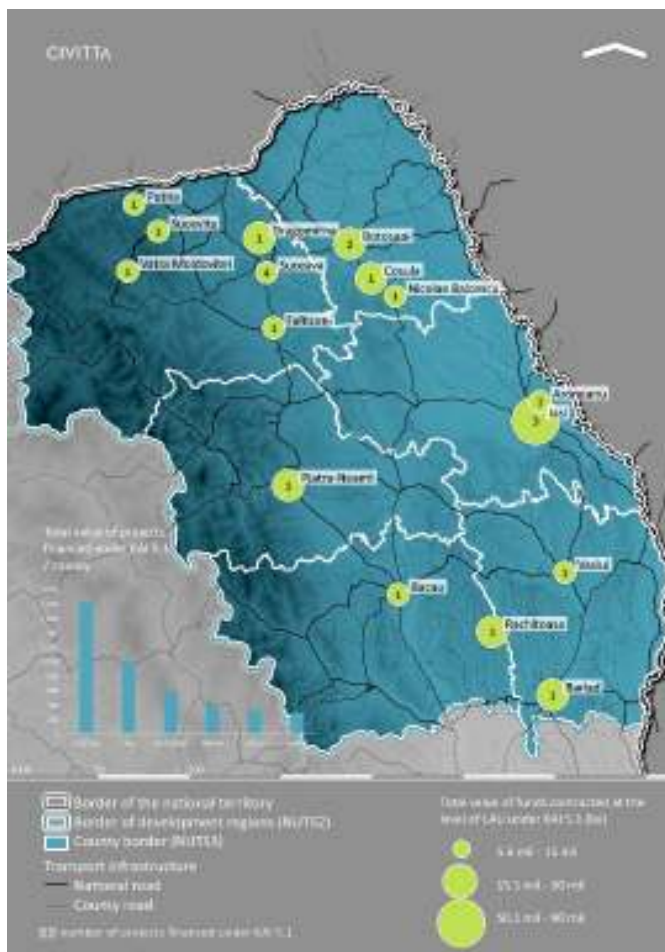
4.3. What type of intervention has produced results, for whom, and under what circumstances?

In order to understand what type of intervention produces results and for whom, we have analysed the most representative projects, the typology of beneficiaries and the typology of interventions, in relation to the volume of funding and the morphology of the development regions and the tourism potential.

North-East Region

In the North-East Region, KAI 5.1 had the greatest impact. This is due both to (1) the specificity of the region, which is rich in historical heritage (fortresses, memorial houses and museums) and ecumenical heritage sites (monasteries, churches) and (2) the larger number of funded projects and the higher allocation of funds which responded both to a great need of works and to the high tourism potential. In the North-West region, the Metropolitan Church of Moldova and Bucovina is also situated, which is a tourist and religious pilgrimage destination that has a great impact at national level. The impact of investments exceeds the administrative borders of the region, as they attract national and even international tourists.

In the North-East Region, no less than 22 projects were financed, totalling Lei 414,605,884.80 lei, at the end of implementation. The distribution by type of beneficiaries was balanced, half of them were ATUs (especially county councils and municipalities) and half were religious institutions. The presence of the project “Tourist valorisation of the Metropolitan Assembly Iasi” stands out in the region, a project of considerable size, of great patrimonial value and one of the main tourism objectives in the country (cultural and pilgrimage tourism), funded with Lei 60,215,216.33.



At territorial level, there is a good distribution of projects, with a higher density in Suceava county and Botoșani (in the historical Bucovina), which offers the possibility of thematic tourist routes. The existence of these routes impacts directly the local economies, but also that of the region.

South-East Region

The South-East Region is the second region in terms of attracting and use of funds under KAI 5.1 of ROP 2007-2013, with a number of 19 projects funded, totally amounting to Lei 253,775,843.10. The profile of beneficiaries is more of a public institution type (CC and city and municipality mayoralties), with only three of the 19 main beneficiaries being worship units.

At the level of the South-East region as well, the territorial distribution is balanced, and the counties benefited, on average, of about 3 projects. In this region, the project “Restoration, consolidation, protection, conservation and valorisation of the archaeological site Capidava Fortress” stands out, which was funded with Lei 74,236,948.56. In the South-East region, projects for the restoration and consolidation of heritage sites with intrinsic value of heritage/historical value prevail, their tourism potential being secondary.



Although the seaside (Constanta County) is one of the most touristic areas in Romania, only one project in the South-West region, funded under KAI 5.1, addressed it directly²³. The good geographic distribution of the projects, in relation to the region morphology, does not also ensure, however, in the case of this region, the necessary conditions for growth based on cultural tourism: the projects are disparate, without any thematic and historical connection, the dedicated tourist routes thus missing. However, the Danube River can offer the early conditions for a synergic development of tourism on the Brăila - Galați - Tulcea section, where a cluster of 5 projects were funded.

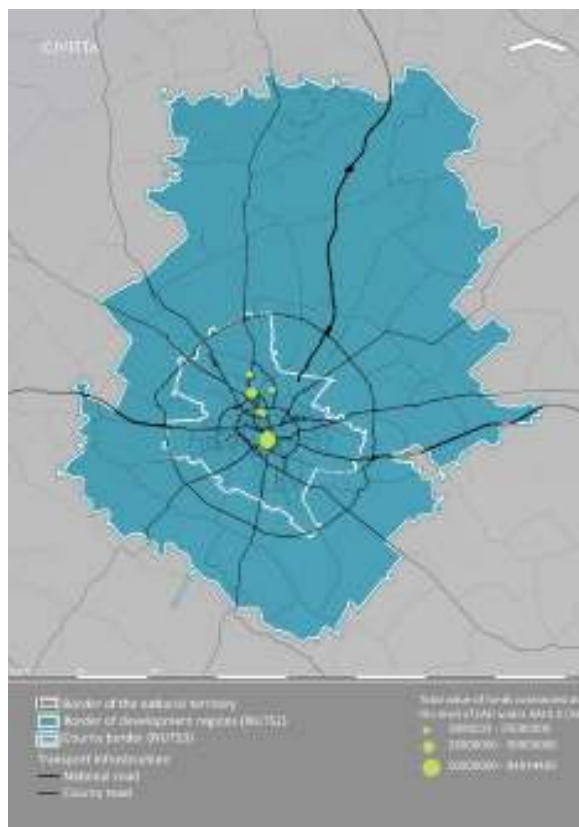
²³ HIPERB - 21st Century Museum for Tourists in Constanta, a project for rehabilitation and restoration of the facade of the Constanta National Museum of History and Archeology.

Bucharest-Ilfov Region

Bucharest is a special case in terms of cultural heritage and its place in attracting tourists, given its size, the status of Capital, the very large number of heritage objectives - approx. 10% of the built heritage mass is in Bucharest etc.

The absence of a tourism or cultural strategy at the time of selecting projects made PMB act on the basis of ad hoc decisions. The whole intervention logic at that time took little account of the specificity of the cultural tourism activity, the projects were not prioritized according to accessibility and connections with other heritage sites that could have been part of cultural routes.

Bucharest attracts because it is the capital of Romania and the main city, but tourists do not come especially to visit heritage sites, the visits to such places are additional to the tourist behaviour.



In Bucharest, the main funded heritage site aimed to consolidate and protect the Patriarchal Palace monument, owned by the Orthodox Church, the budget of this project being larger than all other projects financed: The Triumphal Arch, Cesianu House, Nicolae Minovici Museum, Vasile Urseanu Astronomical Observatory and a church - St. Sofia Floreasca.

In this region, one can note that projects are exclusively focused in Bucharest City, while Ilfov County has no funded project. The projects are located on the North-South axis, at acceptable distances, and can be the subject of tourist routes that also include other objectives, numerous in Bucharest, but not which were not covered by ROP 2007-2013.

South-West Region

The Oltenia region benefited from 11 projects funded under KAI 5.1 with the amount of Lei 176,009,731.20.

The projects in this region were concentrated in Craiova City (6 out of 11), although most of the budget went to Mehedinți County, for the two projects in Drobeta-Turnu Severin (1) Rehabilitation of the Iron Gates Region Museum and (2) its valorisation as a tourism product

Rehabilitation of the Cultural Palace Theodor Costescu and the Severin Fortress.

An interest in the rehabilitation of museum assemblies/buildings was noted in the region, with the local authorities being the main beneficiaries of projects (7 out of 11). In terms of cults heritage (4 projects), the project Consolidation, restoration and remaking functional the seat of Craiova Archdiocese stands out. Other examples of projects with local impact were *Sucidava Fortress in Corabia*, *Rehabilitation of the Cultural Palace: Theodor Costescu and the Severin Fortress* (Local Council Drobeta Turnu Severin), *Rehabilitation and tourism integration of the historical monument Church "Toți Sfinții" Proieni* (Local Council Brezoi).

Projects in the South-West region rather fall within the typology of projects that invested in the rehabilitation/preservation of projects with intrinsic heritage value and lower tourist potential.

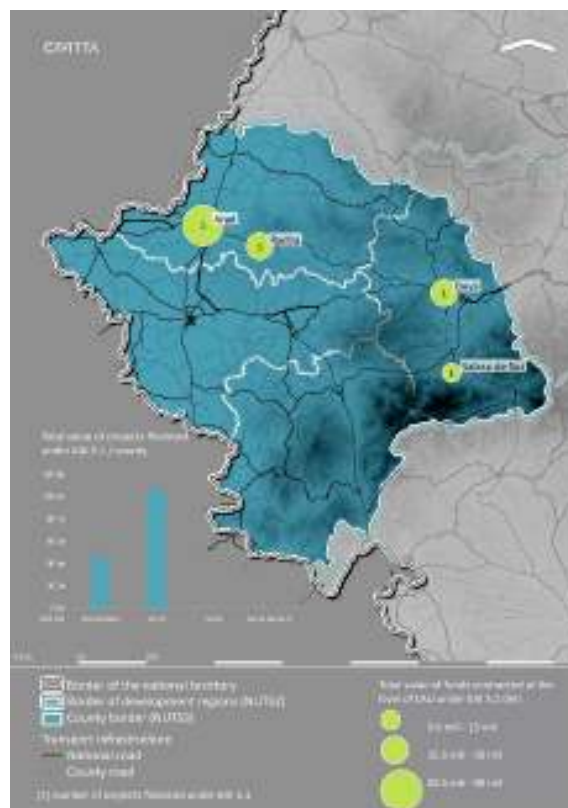
In the South-West Region, the needs regarding the tourism activity were identified in the Regional Development Strategy 2007-2013. The region is a land of monasteries, churches and sketes, being the second region, after Moldova, as number and importance of these religious settlements. The region totals over 60 Orthodox monasteries and sketes, from all the historical periods of the region, starting with the 14th century, some of them having exterior frescoes of special value and being places of pilgrimage, with good tourist potential.

The main problem experienced in the area is access to the rehabilitated sites, which requires a lot of investments in the transport infrastructure.



West Region

Banat has benefited from a small number of projects, only four. However, the projects were well planned and executed, having a direct impact on the increase in the number of tourists, especially in the case of the Church and Monastery Maria Radna and as regards the restoration and functional rehabilitation of the Mălăiești Fortress in Sălașu de Sus, which was introduced into the tourist circuit. The largest project in the region was “Rehabilitation of the Old Historical Center of Arad City” financed with the amount of Lei 58,782,037. The region benefited from the amount of Lei 176,009,731.20 for works dedicated to cultural heritage.



The most significant project in the region in terms of impact, was “The development of cultural tourism in the West Region by renovating and including Radna Church and Monastery into the tourist circuit”. Many pilgrimages are organized at the Maria Radna Monastery, which is an attraction of religious tourism, with a tradition in this from before the communist period. The main tourists come from abroad, most of them being ethnic Hungarians. Following rehabilitation, the cultural and ecumenical life has grown, attracting more tourists (from about 80,000/ year to 110,000/ year), and the local economy has increased.

In the West region, we note that only two of its counties - Arad and Hunedoara - have accessed funds from KAI 5.1, the largest amount (more than double the funds) going to Arad County. Timiș and Caraș Severin counties received no funds. In this context, we must mention that Timiș County lost an important project, “Restoration and refunctionalization of the Huniade Castle of the Banat Timișoara Museum”, due to legal reasons related to ownership.

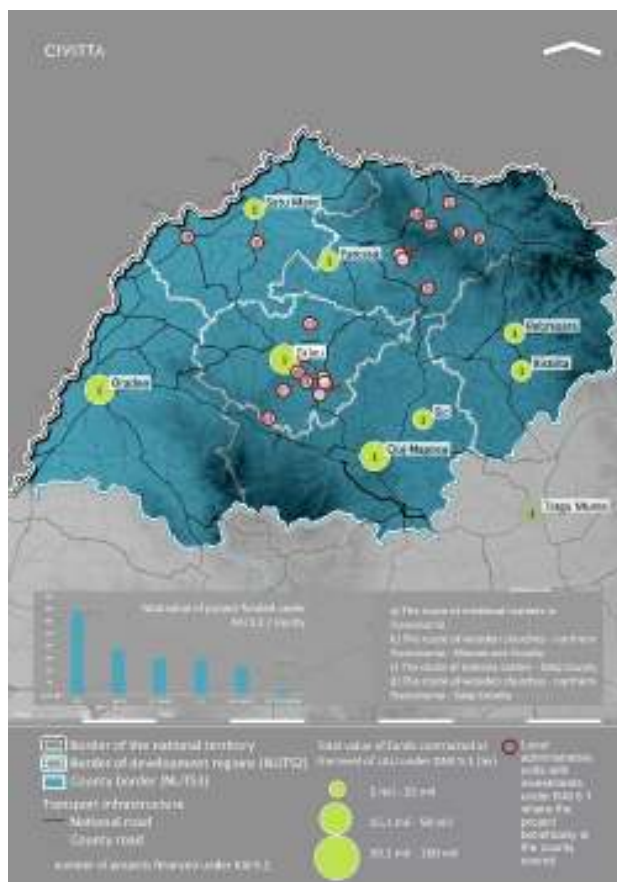
In this region, we mainly had as beneficiaries the local public administration (two municipalities and one commune) and a religious institution, the Roman-Catholic Episcopacy of Timișoara (for the Maria Radna project).

North-West Region

In the North-West region, there were limitations in terms of prioritizing interventions (projects) according to their heritage value, one of the causes being the ownership: ROP did not finance interventions on heritage sites under private ownership, following retrocessions. Thus, heritage sites of significant value could not apply for funding (e.g. the Castle in Bonțida, the Castle in Jilău etc.)

The North-West Region, through its cultural circuits, has a good potential to attract the Hungarian tourists visiting Transylvania, especially tourist attractions related to the history and culture of the Hungarians.

The region benefited from a number of 12 projects, totalizing Lei 185,424,688.10. The specificity of projects in this region is given by the fact that half of them had as objectives the development of tourist circuits such as medieval fairs, wooden churches and Roman castra.

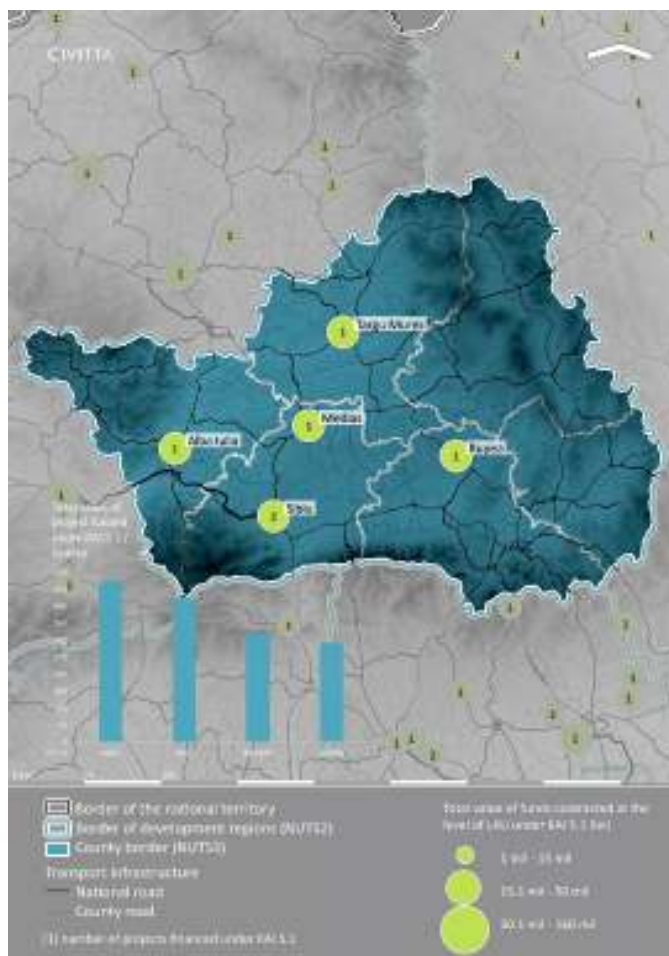


The beneficiaries of funding in the North-West region were, in particular, local public administration authorities (5 CC, one municipality, one city and one commune) and four cult units (2 Reformed, 1 Catholic and 1 Orthodox).

Center Region

This region benefited from seven projects and a budget of Lei 174,602,963.70 (the second lowest, after B-I). The region benefits from a very good cultural tourism potential, with many heritage sites of historical significance for Romanians, Hungarians and Germans, which was also reflected in the projects funded under KAI 5.1.

The most significant project carried out in the region was “Rehabilitation of Historical Center Eastern Route, Southern Route, Northern Route Vauban Fortification -Alba Iulia - access ways, lighting and specific urban furniture”, which reported a record number, of 154,700 tourists annually. Also, we note the projects that highlighted the fortified evangelical churches in Transylvania, as well as the rearrangement and preservation of the medieval fortress in Târgu-Mureș.

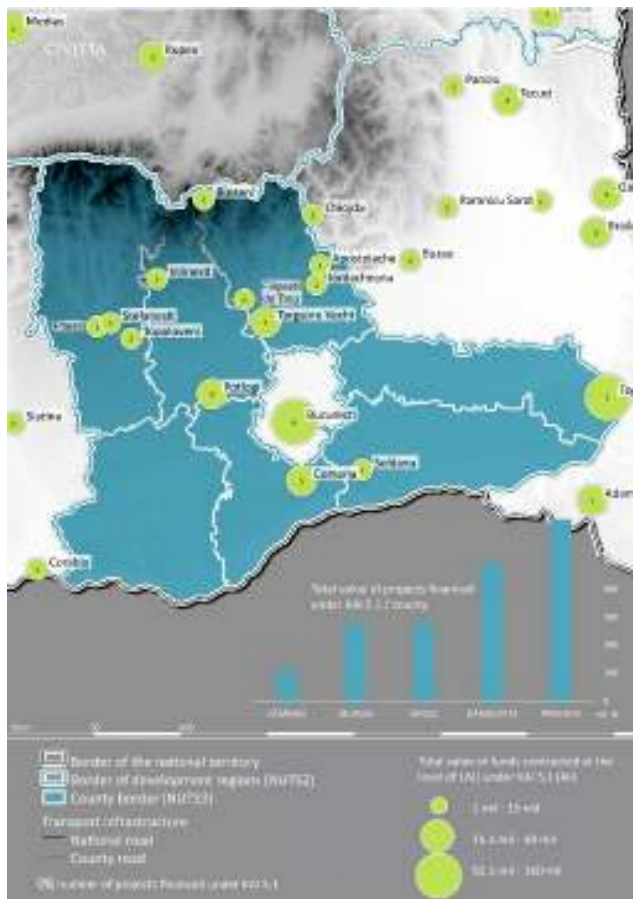


Of the six counties in the region, four received funding under KAI 5.1, in particular Alba and Sibiu counties. As regards the beneficiaries of the funds, seven of them were territorial-administrative units and two were religious units, both evangelical.

One of the reasons why the projects in this Region had good results was that they benefited from synergic effects generated by other cultural heritage projects, which were carried out/ continued in the current programming stage and financed from other sources.

South-Muntenia Region

In this region, 14 projects were completed, totalling Lei 183,730,839.90. The profile of the main beneficiaries was of the small town type. Of the 14 beneficiaries, six were cults and eight were local administrative units, towns and county councils. In the South-Muntenia Region, we note the project “The restoration and sustainable development of cultural heritage, as well as the creation / modernisation of related infrastructures in the area of the Potlogi Brâncoveanu assembly” funded with Lei 42,809,489.34. The funded projects are rather small and disparate in this region, with little potential to be included into tourist circuits, but having a very good advantage, if promoted properly, to attract one-day day tourists from the Bucharest urban area due to the proximity to the capital city. In this regard, we mention the very good, but underused potential of the Golești



Museum Assembly, of the Potlogi Brâncoveanu Assembly and even the Filipescu Pană Mansion from Filipești de Târg. Unfortunately, these cultural sites are not sufficiently promoted and used in tourism and usually, they do not provide for extremely useful complementary facilities such as restaurants, the adjacent sale of small manufactures, and have visiting programs of museum type, from 9.00 am 17.00, which makes them less attractive. The rehabilitated heritage sites have a lower tourist potential, but an increased intrinsic heritage value.

At the level of this region, we note the missed project “Development of the Câmpulung tourist infrastructure by rehabilitating the historical and recreational complex “Kretzulescu Park”, the most massive and complex project attempted, worth Lei 64,303,285.

Bucharest inhabitants can be the main target for these heritage sites, which today are in excellent conditions. It is recommended to carry out well-targeted promotion campaigns to attract one-day tourists. Day tourism, even if it is not as financially productive as one day or several days tourism, can be extremely productive for manufactures and related services (e.g. restaurants, entertainment facilities) if large volumes of tourists are attracted. And the proximity to Bucharest, as well as the existence of average size town (Pitești, Ploiești etc.) are advantages that should be better turned to account.

5.CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND LESSONS LEARNED

Considering that in this report, the evaluation questions were answered promptly, in order to add value to the report and to facilitate its progress for a subsequent programming activity, the evaluation team formulated the conclusions, recommendations and lessons learned according to the evaluation criteria. specific to an evaluation program, proposing the following structure:

Relevance

Effectiveness (reaching the goals)

Impact

- Local impact
- Regional impact
- National impact
- Unintended effects

Efficiency

Implementation

- National / Zonal Culture Commissions
- Problems related to archaeological discharge
- Specific structural issues in the KAI's thematic area 5.1
- Program management and control system

Sustainability

RELEVANCE

Conclusion 1. KAI 5.1. was the most massive, coherent and focused public intervention programmed over the past 30 years to consolidate, rehabilitate, preserve and to restore to the cultural circuit, cultural and historical heritage objectives. Although there have been shortcomings in both programming (as well as in the project selection method), responding to huge financing needs, the KAI 5.1. has produced a positive net impact on some communities at regional and / or local level.

Recommendation: To better prioritize interventions according to (1) tourism potential, (2) historical and cultural value and the urgency of status of heritage objectives / imminence of irreversible degradation, **projects should be evaluated according to criteria clear, abandoning the first-come-first-served method, so that funding for truly significant tourism-related objectives can be prioritized and can generate revenue and ensure economic growth.**

Conclusion 2. The development regions benefited from differently sized funding. The Northeast region is clearly positioned in front of the rest of the development regions, both

in terms of the value and number of projects funded, but also by the impact they have had on communities and at regional level.

Lesson Learned: Concentrating funds in regions with already proven tourism potential (traditionally) produces significant synergic effects. The offensive strategic approach, which not only builds strengths and opportunities, but also maximizes the natural / patrimonial advantages it holds, gives the best results for objectives aimed at increasing the number of tourists (not saving the disparate patrimony with intrinsic value).

Recommendation: A better customization of the program was required according to the specific needs of the regions (cultural tourism needs are different in Bucovina towards Oltenia) by carrying out regional analyzes.

Conclusion 3. The LPA is the main owner of historical and cultural heritage objectives, which followed the destination of the funds: as regards the distribution of funds by types of beneficiaries and regions, the LPA is the main beneficiary of the KAI 5.1, **68% of the funds being used for projects run by the LPA, about one-third of which accounted for Cults, namely 32%.**

Conclusion 4. The projects financed responded to the needs of regional cultural tourism, depending on the specifics and potential of the regions. In the absence of national and regional strategies (at the programming stage of the ROP 2007-2013) dedicated to cultural tourism or generally to the situation of the nationally built heritage, it was difficult to prioritize interventions at program level.

Recommendation: Prioritize, through project evaluation / selection factors, historical and cultural heritage objectives that may be part of thematic routes. Inherent value has all the heritage objectives (because of that they are classified as such), **but the tourist potential does not always overlap with heritage value, an integrated strategic approach being particularly important, favoring the creation of tourist routes** (on thematic basis). This does not imply the financing of the development of tourist routes (the economic activity to be undertaken by the tour operators with market-specific instruments), but the prioritization of the objectives according to the tourist potential, based on ex-ante analyzes that include data collected from national and regional tourism operators.

Conclusion 5. KAI 5.1 responded to a huge financing need in the field of cultural and historical heritage rehabilitation, the beneficiaries of the projects or the representatives of the implementing or partner institutions, the government resources being very limited in this area. Many of the rehabilitated structures were closed or out of the tourist circuits at the start of the projects, but they are now open and accessible.

Recommendation: To favor through the selection criteria / score awarded in the evaluation of applications for funding, significant interventions (large) with high attraction (regardless of the visitor's motivation - tourist or pilgrimage) and favoring the development of the horizontal economy: tourism operators, small manufactures etc.

Conclusion 6. On the whole, with some exceptions, it can be concluded that the use of the KAI 5.1. funds did not primarily pursue tourism objectives, but rather conserving,

consolidating and rehabilitating cultural heritage, with the tourism component being secondary. At the time of the financial allocation, but also at the time of the selection of projects, there is no national view of favoring some tourist destinations included in a strategy. Such strategic documents lacked also at regional level.

Recommendation: Developing strategies based on unitary methodology analyzes by the Regional Development Agencies and with the direct involvement of the Ministry of Tourism and the Ministry of Culture on cultural heritage assets with tourism potential underpinning similar regional KAI 5.1.

EFFECTIVENESS (Achieving Goals)

Conclusion 7: The program has contributed in part, sporadically and with local effects in particular to *increasing the importance of tourism and culture as a factor driving economic growth in the regions, respecting the principles of sustainable development*, with different impacts from region to region.

Lesson Learned: The success of projects that have targeted cultural heritage of the city type (Suceava, Alba Iulia, Deva, Oradea, Piatra Neamt) and monastery type (Maria Radna from Arad, Moldovita, Sucevita, Dragomirna in Suceava). Also, the Metropolitan Church of Iasi and the Patriarchy in Bucharest, which benefited from massive funding, contributes significantly to pilgrimage / ecumenical tourism.

Conclusion 8: All beneficiaries reported an increase in the number of tourists due to the implementation of the projects, some increases being significant, and the causal link between the rehabilitated objective and the increase in the number of tourists can be easily made. On the whole, it can be concluded that this objective has been partially achieved and in some situations even the estimated results have been exceeded several times.

Conclusion 9: There was no influence of KAI 5.1 on the expansion of the tourist season, or if it existed, was negligible. The expectation to increase the tourist season due to interventions on cultural heritage, present through one of the objectives 5.1., was unrealistic.

Recommendation: Setting realistic objectives, adapted to the specificity and territorial dimension of Romania and avoiding the formulation of vague, non-quantifiable objectives and difficult to establish causal relations between the intervention and the expected effects.

IMPACT

Local Impact

Conclusion 10: The interventions financed have had a variable impact, depending on the type of projects and heritage objectives that have benefited from specific works. The local impact has been characterized by the following features: (1) benefits of small local entrepreneurs (hostels, restaurants, small manufactures); (2) the use of local labor for different works; (3) increase the attractiveness of the locality as a tourist destination (with

or without accommodation); (4) Increase in the number of employees in the field of cultural heritage (direct result).

Conclusion 11: The program has had a good impact on local identity where the patrimony objective has been neglected for a long time. Following the implementation of the projects, local communities have realized the value of heritage units in their localities. The impact on the community and on local identity is inversely proportional to the size of the locality. Local pride and sense of belonging can be important factors for building a community and a local economy around the patrimony subject if accompanying measures are implemented.

Recommendation: Imposition of conditions or additional scoring when selecting projects for the involvement of local communities (work, craftsmen, etc.). Heritage conservation objectives should not be limited to the built heritage, but should also encourage the development of restoration / conservation skills at local level through the use of local resources. By using local resources, the "authenticity we seek" when we visit historical objectives is achieved, and they need to use techniques, materials (material layer) and concepts traditionally used.

Regional Impact

Conclusion 12: The observable regional impact is mainly due to major projects and less synergy between funded projects. Where a region has benefited from major projects, the regional impact is perceptible, some of which attract tourists from national and even international. The regional impact is especially felt at the level of the North-East region.

Lesson Learned: The regional impact was better in regions that could alternate tourist attractions with historical value but also relatively impressive with the existence of regional and rare objectives at national and even European level. It is the case of the Center region that attracts tourists from Transylvania, but also from Bucharest or other countries, with a combination of attractions such as fortresses (Rupea, Alba Iulia) and fortified Evangelical monasteries, all in a natural environment favorable to eco-tourism.

National impact

Conclusion 13: As regards tourism (increasing the capacity to attract tourists and contributions to local / regional economies) at national level, the impact of the program cannot be assessed. However, it is obvious that large projects, supported by investments and adjacent interventions of APLs or cults, have the capacity to attract tourists both nationally and internationally. It is the case of several rehabilitated objectives in the North-East area, such as the Metropolitan Church of Iasi, the Fortress of the Suceava, the Monasteries of the 14th-15th century included in the UNESCO patrimony. In the West region, the Maria Radna Monastery attracts numerous tourists from Hungary, we have the Alba Iulia Fortress in the Center region, and in the Bucharest-Ilfov region the Patriarchy Palace.

Recommendation: It is recommended, as a result of proven success, to prioritize, by project selection factors, the fortress-type heritage or monasteries. They have very good economic potential.

Unintended effects

Conclusion 14: There have been situations of consolidation / rehabilitation work that did not respect (1) the traditional methods used in restoration work, (2) the original design, and (3) the conservation project, by the so-called Disney effect.

Recommendation: (1) Granted funding should impose rules that are much more attentive to respecting the specificity of the objective to be restored: restoration criteria (technical indicators) must be clearer and better monitored so that the works are restorative and not to have the appearance of "something new". It is recommended that interventions on heritage objectives be minimal and that much attention be paid to compliance with restoration plans in order for authenticity to be respected. (2) In the absence of the capacity of the commissions subordinated to the Ministry of Culture, it is necessary to create its own technical control / audit mechanisms at program level.

Implementation

National / Zonal Culture Commissions

Conclusion 15: Culture committees have the role of endorsing projects involving work and interventions on heritage objectives and assessing whether interventions have respected the standards contained in the approved design documents. During the implementation of the KAI 5.1, there was a systemic lack of the capacity of these committees to carry out their tasks, delaying the endorsement and, consequently, starting work.

Recommendation: Strengthen the capacity of the cultural / heritage commissions at central and local level by establishing clearer and more efficient working mechanisms, to be identified and implemented by the Ministry of Culture.²⁴

Problems related to archaeological discharge

Conclusion 16: There have been several projects that have been delayed by the fact that the designers / beneficiaries have neglected this legal obligation, did not foresee it among the project activities and have not budgeted appropriate archaeological works (preventive) from the initial stages, in order to be able to receive the archaeological discharge discharge as a matter of urgency.

²⁴ The details of the internal mechanisms to be put into operation by M. Culture are not subject to this assessment. The evaluation team is confronted with this aspect, of the poor functioning of the commissions that have the task of endorsing the work on heritage objectives

Lessons Learned: Specific KAI 5.1 interventions have a very high probability of occurrence of unforeseen situations: during the works, new problems have been discovered that impose adjacent works. These types of funding must have a greater degree of flexibility for unforeseen expenditure or a wider financial envelope to cover work that cannot be anticipated.

Recommendations: (1) Prioritize projects that already have the archaeological discharge; (2) Funding (to become eligible) of the expenditure necessary for archaeological discharge, providing for flexible funding for unforeseen expenditure; (3) Achieving a separate financial tire (from European or national funds) from which the beneficiaries who realize that the archaeological discharge is much more complex than originally thought to be able to access, as a matter of urgency, the necessary funds for archaeological works.

Conclusion 17: Interventions on historical monuments cannot be rigorously planned because they may contain structural problems that cannot be identified at the design stage and which usually generate high costs at the execution stage which cannot be classified as eligible expenditure. In the case of beneficiaries with adequate financial capacities (county councils, etc.) these problems were overcome more easily, being borne from their own budgets. For beneficiaries with low financial capabilities, these problems have led to delays in the execution of the works.

Recommendation: Increase the percentage for unforeseen expenses. If the maximum ceiling is set by European regulations, it is advisable to report this situation to institutions with legislative initiative at EU level (European Commission and European Parliament) to amend legislation to increase the unforeseen expenditure threshold for funding dedicated to cultural heritage interventions.

Specific structural issues in the KAI's thematic area 5.1

Conclusion 18 (a): One of the problems at the level of KAI 5.1 (leaving differences from one region to another) was the identification of economic operators with technical capabilities for restoration and preservation work.

Conclusion 18 (b): Even though project management teams have been good at the eight regions, with the exception of the Centre and Northeast regions, there have been great problems in identifying technical and traditional craftsmanship experts handicrafts to be hired and perform the necessary work. The lack of specific architecture specialists, restorers, patronage managers, restorer engineers, designers has led to delayed bidding procedures or rebates to a set of specific skills because there were no bidders.

Recommendation: Introduction and motivation of beneficiaries to carry out also "soft" professional training activities aimed at vocational training of craftsmen, as well as professional certification thereof. Better correlation with ESF funding, the achievement of professional standards by INP, could facilitate skills development and provide a labour force appropriate to the rehabilitation / restoration of cultural heritage objectives.

Conclusion 19: Significant differences have emerged between the rehabilitated objectives as part of the subdivisions and unreachable assemblies, the latter being shadowed.

Recommendation: Inclusion / eligibility of redevelopment works and assemblies subdivided into the general project, in order to ensure complete and attractive touristic interventions.

Program management and control system

Conclusion 20: Different methods of collecting and presenting data in sustainability reports were used at the level of regions or even within the same region (some beneficiaries used nominal values, other beneficiaries used percentage values without being specified nominal value) which makes it impossible to accurately quantify the increase in the number of tourists in nominal values as well as the percentage estimates. The two program indicators (project Number of projects founded by KAI 5.1 and number of newly created / maintained jobs) are insufficient for the mid-term and ex-post evaluations to be carried out with all due diligence. There was a confusion, also signalled by the report previous assessment that the indicator "No. newly created jobs "can be understood differently from the indicator" no. persistently maintained places."

Recommendation: Identification of more relevant program indicators, clearer formulations and easier to monitor is required. Also, imposing a standard reporting format (especially in the case of sustainability reports) using unique numerical systems: either nominal values or percentages whose initial baseline is to be specified and using unique time intervals (e.g. No. of tourists per year).

Sustainability

Conclusion 21. The projects integrate good sustainability and the effects of the interventions are maintained. However, there are significant discrepancies in the capacities of beneficiaries to (1) achieve and follow conservation / maintenance plans, (2) promote and develop "selling stories" (interpretation plans), (3) management / business for the economic valorization of cultural heritage objectives from a touristic point of view.

Recommendation (a): Introducing the obligation (through future guidelines) that beneficiaries should carry out activities to increase their capacity to achieve and follow plans for preservation / maintenance of heritage objectives, specific to museum practices, to be rehabilitated from European funds. Such activities can be extracted from the standards presented in the Law on Museums and Public Collections, no. 311/2003.

Recommendation (b): Development of interpretation plans. Heritage objectives built generally have many non-explicit histories, which is why they are not known. As soft, adjacent actions, it is recommended to impose activities to develop interpretation plans for the public that contain (in keeping with the historical truth) some stimuli and



interpretations. These activities are meant both to attract more tourists and to preserve the immaterial aspect of the national heritage.

Recommendation regarding the evaluation: Given the accessibility and quality of the data, as well as the willingness of the actors involved to get involved in the evaluation process, we believe that a realistic duration for an impact assessment should be 8 months.