



# IMPLEMENTATION OF THE REVITALISATION OF THE RAČJI DVORMANSION

## PROVEDBA REVITALIZACIJE DVORCA RAČJI DVOR

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**Abstract:** Račji dvor is a mansion on the western edge of the city of Maribor and has the status of a cultural monument of national importance and a rare preserved example of the development of an economic unit from the Middle Ages to the present day. Despite the important cultural heritage status of the manor, today it is in poor condition and is not maintained. The municipality of Maribor therefore wants to revitalise it into a tourist destination for local and foreign visitors. As an example of good practices, we cite some revitalised mansions and castles in Slovenia and Europe. Our research shows that visitors most often choose to go on excursions and visit cultural heritage monuments because of interesting natural and cultural attractions, the possibility of recreation in nature, attending cultural events and catering. In conclusion, we formulated proposals for services and activities at the revitalised Račji dvor: implementation of ceremonial and protocol events, thematic workshops for different age groups, catering services and a wine shop, and cultural events.

**Keywords:** Revitalisation, cultural heritage, tourist destination, Račji dvor

**Sažetak:** Račji Dvor je dvorac na zapadnom rubu grada Maribora i ima status spomenika kulture od državnog značaja i rijedak je sačuvani primjer razvoja gospodarske cjeline od srednjeg vijeka do danas. Unatoč važnom statusu kulturne baštine dvorca, danas je u lošem stanju i neodržiava se. Općina Maribor stoga ga želi revitalizirati uturističku destinaciju za domaće i strane posjetitelje. Kao primjer dobre prakse navodimo neke revitalizirane kurije i dvorce u Sloveniji i Europi. Naša istraživanja pokazuju da se posjetitelji najčešće odlučuju za izlete i posjete spomenicima kulturne baštine zbog zanimljivih prirodnih i kulturnih znamenitosti, mogućnosti rekreacije u prirodi, posjećivanja kulturnih događanja i ugostiteljske ponude. Zaključno, izradili smo prijedloge usluga i aktivnosti u revitaliziranom Račjem dvoru: izvedba svečanih i protokolarnih događanja, tematske radionice za različite dobne skupine, ugostiteljske usluge i vinoteka, kulturna događanja i izrada rekreativnih staza učenja u prirodi.

**Ključne riječi:** revitalizacija, kulturna baština, turistička destinacija, Račji Dvor

## 1. Introduction

In the research, we will define a proposal for including activities after renovating the cultural monument from the 18th century - the Račji dvor manor. Reviving the manor means preserving the cultural heritage, so the revitalisation must comply with the provisions of the Act on the Protection of Cultural Heritage (2008). The Račji dvor mansion has untapped potential, which, when remodelled, could be used for education, workshop presentations, handicraft production, or evenings with wine gatherings.

With the research, we wanted to obtain proposals regarding the rearrangement of the Račji dvor manor's abandoned building, aiming to preserve the original character of the cultural monument, as this would reduce the risk of the building's degradation. Our goal was basically to review the literature and records directly related to the Račji Dvor manor, to present the Račji Dvor manor, to analyse the established management practices of protected material cultural heritage and examples of good practice in Slovenia and Europe and based on the primary research carried out, to make proposals for implementation revitalisation.

Within the framework of the descriptive approach, we used a comparative or comparative method, with the help of which we compared tourist categories with each other, identified similarities and differences, and compared the management of objects of historical and cultural importance among the selected countries. With the help of the online tool Ika, we could reach the respondents by e-mail, who were able to complete the survey in the most suitable time frame between December 2022 and February 2023. The questionnaire contained 22 questions, to which the respondents answered using a scale where they expressed their agreement or disagreement with certain statements and 4 demographic questions.

In research, in addition to the limited availability of resources and time constraints, we are also faced with limitations on the side of established ethical principles, such as honesty, avoiding plagiarism, and obtaining consent and permissions for publication (Myers, 2009). Geographically, we are limited to exploring the area of Maribor's cultural monument, the Račji dvor manor, which is in awful condition and needs renovation. The limitation is partly represented by incompletely completed questionnaires and the lack of previous research on Račji dvor manor.

When conducting the research, we asked ourselves the following research question: With what contents would it be possible to ensure a suitable visit of potential guests after the revitalisation of the Račji dvor manor?

## **2. Presentation of the Račji dvor Manor**

### *2.1. The history of Račji dvor Manor*

The Račji dvor manor was first mentioned around 1200. In the 18th century, it acquired a late-baroque appearance (Castles of Slovenia, 2019a). The mansion of the once more significant vineyard estate of the Benedictine Abbey consists of four tracts around the inner courtyard. There are gardens, parks, fields and vineyards around. It is a rare preserved example of the development of an economic unit from the Middle Ages to the economy of the 20th century. Until 1937, it belonged to the Benedictine monastery in Admont. He had many properties in this area, especially vineyards. The one-story court consists of four tracts surrounding an inner rectangular courtyard. The building's history, which has been going on for three centuries, is hidden in the manor. The core is the eastern tract with a cross-vaulted wine cellar dating from the 17th century; the southern and western economic tracts were added in the 18th century. Račji dvor then acquired a late-baroque, classicist look. In the middle of the 19th century, a large wooden press was placed in the northern part of the eastern tract, and in the second half of the 19th century, the north tract was also built (Kraji - Slovenia, 2022). An open-air museum is located near Račji dvor. Around the central building are buildings characteristic of Styria in the Dravsko polje, Haloze, Slovenske gorice, Pohorje and Kozjak. They arrange the environment around the buildings in various ways, such as planting old fruit trees, brads, farm gardens, pastures, and fields (Gradovi Slovenije, 2019a).

The Račji dvor manor has been declared a cultural monument of national importance. The heritage unit has special significance for the Republic of Slovenia due to its cultural, ethnological, landscape,

artistic, architectural, historical and other exceptional properties. The monument's boundary is determined by the digital cadastral plan and the basic topographical plan kept by the Ministry of Culture. The monument is subject to a protection regime that stipulates the protection of cultural, architectural, ethnological, landscape, artistic and historical values in their entirety, in their originality and integrity, a ban on processing all artistic and technical elements of the building, which are valued as part of the monument, within the area is prohibited installation of buildings of a permanent or temporary nature, including above-ground and underground infrastructure and advertising carriers, except in cases approved by the competent institution with prior cultural protection consent (Zakon o varstvu kulturne dediščine, 2008).

## *2.2. Condition of the Račji dvor Manor*

The Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Education were warned by letter about the condition of the Račji dvor in Maribor. There are apartments on part of the floor; otherwise, the courtyard is empty. The building is in bad condition because no one maintains the building. The facade on the eastern side of the manor is badly damaged due to water pipes being stuck. Depending on the condition of the building, the owner must first provide funds for regular maintenance. It is necessary to repair the damage to the roof and gutters and thus prevent further deterioration of the building (Skalicky, 2006). The building is in inferior construction condition, especially the roof, roof and facades. The high groundwater that floods the basement is destroying the foundations. The basement is partially filled. Due to inadmissible interventions during the renovation of the basement rooms in 1990 (demolished parts of load-bearing walls, cut tension ties), the manor was also statically threatened. According to the static construction study and the plans for the remediation of moisture, urgent remedial work was carried out, with a system of external and internal drainage, waterproofing, remediation of basement foundations, deepening of the basement to the original depth, remediation of tension ties, partial emergency renovation of the basement and ground floor, and renovation of the roof and facades. The last renovation was stormwater drainage in the palace's inner courtyard. After that, the rehabilitation work did not continue. The Račji dvor manor has an architectural map made in M 1:50 and a conservation program for the rehabilitation and renovation of the building (Skalicky, 2006).

## **3. Understanding and preservation of natural and cultural heritage**

### *3.1. Presentation of the field*

Natural heritage refers to natural elements that have exceptional value from the point of view of science, aesthetics, history, and culture and are essential for preserving biotic diversity (Marcoux & Carver, 2018). That includes geological formations, plant and animal species, ecosystems, natural beauty and areas of outstanding ecological value (Dieckmann & Bauman, 2017).

Cultural heritage refers to tangible and intangible evidence of human history, culture and civilisation (Smith & Smith, 2013). That includes monuments, archaeological sites, historic buildings, cultural landscapes, works of art, customs, languages and knowledge (Timothy & Boyd, 2018).

Natural and cultural heritage are of great importance to humanity. Natural heritage provides essential ecosystem services such as air and water purification, food production and climate regulation (Balmford et al., 2002). It also offers opportunities for recreation, tourism and spiritual fulfilment (Gomez-Baggethun & Barton, 2013). Cultural heritage helps us understand our past, form an identity and strengthen social cohesion (Smith & Wilson, 2006). It gives us contact with different cultures and offers us an insight into human creativity and ingenuity (Hicks, 2018).

Natural and cultural heritage are crucial elements of humanity's identity and history. The conservation of these heritages requires a comprehensive approach that includes both scientific and social aspects and presents different approaches and challenges related to this process (Harrison, 2012).

### 3.2. *The importance of understanding and preserving natural and cultural heritage*

Understanding natural and cultural heritage is crucial to its effective conservation. Cultural heritage includes material and non-material elements such as architectural monuments, archaeological sites, works of art, languages, customs and traditions (Vecco, 2010). Natural heritage includes landscapes, ecosystems and biodiversity (Norton, 2014).

Knowledge of heritage enables the development of strategies for its preservation. For example, conserving stone monuments requires specific knowledge about materials and ageing processes, enabling sustainable restoration approaches (Price & Doehne, 2011).

Heritage conservation involves different methods and approaches. Among them are technological innovations such as 3D visualisations and artificial intelligence, which enable better documentation and interpretation of heritage (Bogdanovich et al., 2010). Digital technologies allow interactive illustrations of historical events and structures, increasing accessibility and public interest in heritage.

In recent years, there has been an increasing emphasis on a sustainable approach to heritage conservation. That includes considering the impacts of climate change on cultural and natural monuments and developing tools to assess risks and adapt strategies for heritage protection (Sardella et al., 2020).

Heritage conservation faces many challenges. One of the biggest challenges is coordinating the interests of various stakeholders, including local communities, government, non-governmental organisations, and international institutions (Harrison, 2012). It is also important to secure financial resources for conservation projects, which often require innovative approaches, such as heritage marketing and the involvement of the tourism industry (Kolar & Zabkar, 2010).

Based on what has been written, we can say that the preservation of natural and cultural heritage is a complex challenge that requires intersectoral cooperation and a coordinated approach, to which the following can contribute:

- Adoption of legislation: Governments must adopt laws that protect natural and cultural heritage and prevent its destruction (Di Cosmo & Galli, 2016). It is essential that legislation considers local contexts and includes the participation of local communities (Baird, 2017).
- International cooperation: International cooperation is crucial for exchanging knowledge, experience and good practices in heritage conservation (Prevedello & Di Giovanni, 2012). UNESCO and ICOMOS play essential roles in this, as they determine international standards and guidelines for heritage preservation.
- Education and awareness: Education and public awareness of the importance of natural and cultural heritage are crucial to promoting responsible heritage management (Ham & Mulongoy, 2018). It is essential to include heritage education in curricula and encourage the public to actively participate in heritage preservation (Baldacchino & Beaman, 2018).
- Funding: The preservation of natural and cultural heritage requires significant financial resources. Governments, international organisations, and the private sector must allocate sufficient funds for heritage preservation and innovative financing, such as public-private partnerships (Mazzoleni & Archambault, 2018).
- Sustainable tourism: Sustainable tourism can significantly contribute to preserving natural and cultural heritage. It is crucial to promote forms of tourism that respect the heritage and do not place additional burdens on the environment (Milano et al., 2014).

- Involvement of local communities: The local community plays a crucial role in preserving natural and cultural heritage. It is essential to include residents in the decision-making processes of heritage preservation and to allow them to participate in heritage management (Howard, 2007). That can encourage local ownership of heritage and strengthen support for conservation.

Science plays an essential role in the conservation of natural and cultural heritage, as scientific research can help understand threats to heritage, develop effective conservation strategies and monitor conservation progress. The collaboration of scientists with heritage managers, local communities and policymakers in finding solutions for heritage conservation is therefore of utmost importance. Some examples of the use of science in heritage conservation include:

- Using remote sensing to monitor the state of natural heritage (Rignold & Nenzhumeri, 2016),
- Archaeological research is used to understand past cultures and societies (Hassan, 2018).
- Scientific analysis preserves cultural assets (Mills & Chicco, 2013).
- Using biodiversity surveys to assess the impact of human activities on natural heritage (Pereira et al., 2010).
- Using climate models to predict the impact of climate change on heritage (Carney et al., 2009).

The understanding and preservation of natural and cultural heritage is crucial for preserving humanity's historical and cultural identity. Modern methods, including digital technologies and sustainable approaches, enable better protection and promotion of heritage. Still, successful preservation also requires cooperation between different stakeholders and adequate funding.

## **4. Management of objects of historical and cultural importance**

### *4.1. Management of buildings of historical and cultural importance in Slovenia and examples of successful revitalisation of buildings*

The UNESCO Convention on World Cultural and Natural Heritage protects cultural and natural sites with universal value for all nations and humanity. Among the more than 1,000 listed sights, we also find sights from Slovenia (STO, 2022).

In the category of cultural heritage, three monument areas in Slovenia have been inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List, namely the prehistoric piles on Ig in the Ljubljana Marshes within the transnational serial area of prehistoric piles around the Alps, the mercury heritage of Idrija- Almaden and the Works of Jože Plečnik in Ljubljana - urban design according to man (Ministrstvo za šolstvo, znanost in šport, 2022).

In Slovenia, the Institute for the Protection of Cultural Heritage (IPCH) and the Ministry of Culture care for cultural heritage. At the Ministry of Culture, they perform tasks related to art, culture, cultural heritage, media, the Slovenian language, religious freedom, cultural diversity, and human rights. They provide a stimulating environment for the development of culture and art. Because they know that cultural heritage is a seal of the existence of the national and state community, they preserve it holistically and enforce it as a source for economic and social development (Ministrstvo za kulturo, 2022).

IPCH deals with the identification, evaluation and documentation of cultural heritage. Preparation of proposals for the entry of heritage into the register managed by the Ministry of Culture, preparation

of conservation plans and restoration projects, supervision of construction, research and protection interventions in cultural heritage, as well as supervision and conducting archaeological research, providing advice to owners of cultural heritage, and their education (ZVKDS, 2015).

On 4 March 2022, the Ministry of Culture, based on the National Recovery and Resilience Plan adopted by the Government of the Republic of Slovenia on 28 April 2021, on the Recovery and Resilience Mechanism and the Executive Decision of the Council on the approval of the assessment of the Recovery and Resilience Plan for Slovenia announced a public tender for co-financing projects of sustainable restoration and revitalisation of cultural monuments owned by municipalities and the integration of cultural experiences into Slovenian tourism from the funds for the implementation of the National Recovery and Resilience Plan (designation JR-NOO-KS 2022-25). The subject of the public tender is the co-financing of projects for the restoration and revitalisation of cultural monuments owned by municipalities, which, in addition to investments in restoration, will also include activities for connecting and enhancing the tourist offer using information and communication technologies for the promotion and interpretation of cultural heritage. The tender aims to promote significant investments in renovation, restoration, comprehensive revitalisation and modernisation of cultural monuments owned by municipalities with a multiplier effect on economic and tourist development (Uradni list RS, 29/2022).

The state has helped restore various castles over the past twenty years through different national and European tenders. They also included the interpretation of cultural heritage and designed integral tourist products and services. The most recognisable among them are:

- Otočec Castle was first mentioned in 1252 and boasts the title of the only water castle in Slovenia (Gradovi Slovenije, 2019b).
- Strmol Estate with the Strmol Castle is one of the few castles in Slovenia that has kept its Slovenian name all along. He is the recipient of the prestigious “ Unique “ award Castle of the Year 2018”, awarded by the specialised tourist magazine Travel & Hospitality from London (Brdo.si, 2022).
- Kostel Castle is the second largest castle complex in Slovenia, and due to its exposed location above Kolpa, it is more difficult to access (Čas za izlet, 2022).
- Villa Vipolže was originally a hunting manor of the counts of Goriška, which was built in 1252, was affected by a fire in 1948, and was reopened after revitalisation in 2013 (Vila Vipolže, 2023).
- Ljubljana Castle dates back to the middle of the 16th century and is also the main venue for civil wedding ceremonies in Ljubljana (Turizem Ljubljana, 2022).

#### 4.2. *Management of buildings of historical and cultural importance in the EU and examples of successful revitalisation of buildings*

Cultural heritage is an essential source of economic growth, employment and social cohesion, helping to revitalise urban and rural areas and promoting sustainable tourism, as more than 300,000 people are employed in the cultural heritage sector in the EU, and 7.8 million jobs are indirectly linked to heritage (e.g. hospitality, interpretation and security). While policy-making in this area is primarily the responsibility of member states’ regional and local authorities, the EU is committed to protecting and strengthening European cultural heritage. It does this through several policy areas and programs (European Parliamentary Research Service, 2022).

The European Commission defines cultural heritage as “natural, built and archaeological sites, museums, monuments, works of art, historical sites, literary, musical and audiovisual works and

European citizens' knowledge, practices and traditions". Europe's cultural heritage is of enormous economic importance to the tourism industry, generating an estimated annual revenue of €335 billion, and many of the 9 million jobs in the tourism sector are directly or indirectly linked to it. The EU-funded project Cultural Heritage Counts for Europe aims to raise awareness of cultural heritage's social, economic, cultural and environmental impact and its many benefits. Responsibility for cultural heritage policies and funding is shared by the European Commission's Directorates-General for Culture and Education, Research and Regional Policy (European Parliamentary Research Service, 2022).

Although cultural policy and the care of cultural heritage are the exclusive responsibility of the Member States, the EU Treaty stipulates that the EU "ensures the protection and enhancement of European cultural heritage". The importance of cultural heritage is recognised in the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU), which defines the EU's role in this area as promoting cooperation between member states and supporting the improvement of "the knowledge and dissemination of the culture and history of the European nations" and "the preservation and protection of the cultural heritage of the European importance". It also defines the role of the European Parliament, including the adoption of incentive measures with the Council of the EU (Pasikowska-Schnass, 2018).

Italy ranks first in UNESCO's cultural heritage protection with as many as 58 objects. Among the most well-known (McComish, 2020) are the archaeological sites of Pompeii, Herculaneum and Torre Annunziata, the city of Verona, the Amalfi Coast, Mount Etna, the Historic Centre of Rome, Monte San Giorgio, Venice and its lagoon, the Botanical Garden, Padua, the historic centre of Florence and the Dolomites. Italy has been a member of the International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property (ICCROM) since 1957 (ICCROM, 2022a).

In Austria, cultural heritage is dealt with by the Federal Ministry of Labor and the Economy with the Department for Cultural Heritage. They currently manage 103 properties, 449 buildings and 477 other objects (monuments, fountains, enclosures and similar objects) that are part of the cultural heritage of the Republic of Austria and are used by federal agencies, museums or federal organisations, churches or private individuals. Austria has several UNESCO World Heritage sites, and among the most famous are the historic centre of Salzburg, Graz and the Schloss Eggenberg, Hallstatt–Dachstein / Salzkammergut Cultural Landscape, Schönbrunn Palace and Gardens, Fertö / Neusiedlersee Cultural Landscape, Semmering Railway, Wachau Cultural Landscape and Vienna's Historical Centre (Immigration & Residency, 2022).

Protecting and managing tangible cultural heritage in Hungary is governed by legislation, essentially Act LXIV of 2001, on protecting cultural heritage. Hungary is currently carrying out preparatory tasks to include the directives of the Faro Convention in heritage policy (Council of Europe, 2022). The Government of Hungary has quite several attractions inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List, the most famous of which are Budapest, including the banks of the Danube, the Buda Castle Quarter and Andrassy Avenue, the caves of the Aggteleky and Slovak Karsts, the Hortobágy – Puszta National Park, the early Christian necropolis of Pécs (Sopianae), and the historical cultural landscape of the Tokaj wine region (ICCROM, 2022b).

For many years, especially since the UNESCO Convention on the Protection of Intangible Cultural Heritage was ratified in 2005, the Republic of Croatia has carried out intensive valorisation, inventory, documentation and promotion of intangible cultural heritage. Every year, the Ministry of Culture supports a series of activities through public tenders that ensure the long-term, sustainable development of creative approaches to heritage preservation. Some of the most famous cultural sights in Croatia are the Episcopal complex of the Euphrasian Basilica in the historic centre of Poreč, the

historic city of Trogir, the historical complex of Split with Diocletian's Palace, and the old town of Dubrovnik (Republika Hrvatska Ministarstvo za kulturo i medije, 2022).

## 5. Research results

### 5.1. Presentation of the research sample and implementation

We created the survey questionnaire in the online form (application 1ka). Before sending the link to the survey, we made a set of potential guest segments. In addition, we shared the survey link on social networks and asked Facebook groups to fill out the survey and share it further. The survey contained 22 questions and was divided into content and demographic parts. In the substantive part, we asked respondents about their reasons for visiting a tourist destination, what they were most interested in (activities), and how much they were willing to pay for a one-day visit. In various questions, we used different rating scales (1-3, 1-4 and 1-5). At the end of the questionnaire, we added demographic questions where we wanted to know the gender, age, education and where the respondents come from. The survey was active from 15 December 2022 to 12 February 2023.

### 5.2. Research results

The survey was completed by 582 respondents, of which 470 were female and 89 were male. According to their education, 41% (238) have post-secondary education, 29% (169) secondary education, 28% (163) postgraduate and 2% (12) other options. Among the respondents, 68% (395) were employed, 16% (93) were students, 10% (59) were business owners and 6% (35) were retired. The average age of the respondents was 38.6 years.

**Figure 1: Demographic data**

	category	Frequency	%
gender	female	470	81%
	men	89	15%
	another	23	4%
	Together	582	
education	high school	238	41%
	high school	169	29%
	postgraduate	163	28%
	the rest	12	2%
	Together	582	
employment	employed	395	68%
	a student	93	16%
	owner of the company	59	10%
	pensioner	35	6%
	Together	582	
age	average age	38.6 years	

It should be noted that 81% of the respondents pointed out that they would visit the manor for its natural and cultural attractions, 47% pointed out the food on offer, 44% would visit the manor if cultural events and festivals will be held there, 38% if they had the possibility of tasting wines in



a wine cellar, 34% for relaxation and recreation in nature and 20% for visiting business events and congresses.

**Figure 2: Reasons for visiting the manor**

	%
natural and cultural attractions	81%
food supply	47%
performance of cultural events and festivals	44%
wine tasting in a wine cellar	38%
relaxation and recreation in nature	34%
visiting business events and congresses	20%

Among the criteria that influence the decision to visit a tourist destination, the respondents, with an average rating of 4.3, highlighted the proximity of the parking lot, with an average rating of 4.2, the professionalism of the staff, and with an average rating of 4.1 the orderliness of the place and affordable prices. Other authors also presented similar findings in their research (Bertan, 2020; Richards, 2018; Ketter & Avraham, 2021).

In the survey, we asked potential visitors how much they are willing to spend for a one-day visit to the destination, per person in EUR, taking into account transportation, sightseeing and 1x hot meal with a drink. On average, they are willing to spend approximately EUR 86 for a full-day visit to the destination. At the same time, statistical data show that in 2021, Slovenians spent an average of EUR 82 per day (SURS, 2022). Respondents most often look for information on online portals related to tourism and follow different providers and groups on social networks, which influence information efficiency, accuracy of information and ease of use on the level of interest in promoting tourism (Alghizzawi, Salloum & Habes, 2018).

In various cultural and historical monuments, business meetings, conferences and presentations of new products are also often held, so the respondents highlighted access to the Internet (89%), computer (82%), projector (78%), and a white wall as part of these activities or canvas and the possibility of feasting (both in 68%). Business tourism or MICE tourism has many advantages; one of the main benefits of MICE tourism for companies and the host region, the respondents emphasised above all the economic (employment, income and expenses), socio-cultural and promotional effects of MICE tourism, which is also noted in the research (Kizanlikli and Çivgin, 2019).

## 6. Discussion of the research question

At the beginning of the research, we asked ourselves the following research question: In what ways and with what contents would it be possible to carry out the revitalisation of the Račji dvor manor? We will provide an answer to the posed research question with the help of various proposals formulated based on the results of the answers to the conducted research.

Revitalising the Račji dvor manor will undoubtedly be a complex process requiring a comprehensive approach and the integration of various contents and activities. To answer the research question, we also used scientific and academic articles that examine the revitalisation of historical buildings in their content and indicate potential approaches and content for their successful revival.

One of the main approaches to revitalising historical buildings is developing cultural and tourist content. The Račji dvor mansion could become a cultural centre, including museum collections,

art exhibitions, concert halls and spaces for various cultural events. Such an approach increases the attractiveness of the facility for domestic and foreign visitors and promotes local tourism (Gražulevičiūtė-Vileniškė & Urbonas, 2011). Even in the survey, as much as 55% of respondents expressed interest in such activities. They highlighted various concerts, film festivals, cinema and open-air puppet shows.

In addition, the mansion could host various educational programs and workshops to preserve cultural heritage, art, history, and crafts. That would make the manor a crucial educational centre attracting students, researchers, and culture lovers. It is essential to collaborate with universities and academic institutions to develop such programs (Cheung and Chan, 2012). That area was also highlighted by 16% of the respondents, who suggested that the destination could hold natural history days, professional excursions, various thematic workshops in cuisine, old crafts and handicrafts, and outdoor education in biotechnical fields.

The revitalisation of historic buildings usually also contributes to economic development. The mansion could host commercial activities such as restaurants, cafes, shops with local products and commercial premises. Such an approach increases the financial value of the facility and contributes to job creation (Jayantha and Yung, 2018). Also, in our survey, 20% of respondents indicated that they attended business events and congresses. At the same time, 47% of respondents would visit the manor because of the catering offer, and 38% would go for a tasting in the wine cellar.

Modern technologies such as digitisation and virtual reality can significantly contribute to the revitalisation of the manor. Digital archives, virtual tours and interactive exhibitions make cultural heritage accessible to the general public and increase interest in visiting the castle (Bogdanovich et al., 2010). As many as 56% of the respondents highlighted various forms of relaxation and learning from this area, as this way, they could learn about history, and based on video and virtual reality, they would better understand the past and learn about the flora and fauna within the destination of Račji dvor.

It is imperative to consider sustainable approaches when revitalising the manor, including energy efficiency, renewable energy sources and environmental preservation. That contributes to the facility's long-term sustainability and reduces negative environmental impacts (Sardella et al., 2020).

Revising the Račji dvor manor will require integrating various approaches and contents, including cultural, educational, economic and technological aspects. With the cooperation of multiple stakeholders and considering sustainable strategies, the manor can become an important centre of culture, education, and economic development.

## 7. Conclusion

The Račji dvor manor is a historical building representing an important cultural heritage. The revitalisation of such facilities requires a comprehensive approach that includes cultural, economic, educational and sustainability aspects. This research focuses on the possibilities and methods for revitalising the Račji dvor manor, discusses the key issues and identifies proposals for further research in this area.

The research analysed the literature on revitalising historic buildings and examples of good practices. We reviewed scholarly articles and case studies that included various methods and approaches to revitalisation, including cultural and tourism content, educational activities, economic development, use of modern technologies, and sustainable development.

The revitalisation must be done by considering sustainable approaches, including energy efficiency, using renewable energy sources and preserving the environment. That ensures the facility's long-term

sustainability and reduces negative environmental impacts. Cultural and tourist content plays a crucial role in revitalising historical buildings. The Račji dvor mansion could become a cultural centre with museums, galleries and spaces for cultural events. That would increase the facility's attraction to visitors and boost local tourism. Educational activities such as workshops and seminars on cultural heritage, art, and history could attract students and researchers and increase manor's importance as an academic centre. Including economic activities such as restaurants, shops with local products and commercial premises would increase the economic value of the manor and contribute to creating jobs. Modern digital technologies, such as digitisation, virtual reality and interactive exhibitions, would make cultural heritage more accessible and increase interest in visiting the manor. These technologies also enable better protection and documentation of cultural heritage.

The results show that a comprehensive approach to revitalising historic buildings, which includes cultural, educational, economic and sustainability aspects, contributes to the successful revival of such buildings. The cooperation of various stakeholders, including local communities, government, non-governmental organisations and the private sector, is also essential.

For further research and the preparation of a suitable revitalisation plan, it would be appropriate to focus on the development and use of new technologies, such as artificial intelligence and 3D modelling, to improve the documentation and interpretation of historic buildings, to study the impacts of sustainable practices on the long-term sustainability of historic buildings and the environment, and economic effects of revitalisation on local communities, including job creation and stimulation of the local economy. In addition, further research should create a model for the inclusion of various stakeholders in the revitalisation process to ensure successful cooperation and the achievement of common goals, especially research should be considered on how to ensure the restoration of the Račji Dvor mansion as quickly as possible with the help of a mixed public-private partnership, and provided him with a new life.

The manor has not yet fully arranged the transfer of ownership to the Municipality of Maribor. Once this is formally regulated, it will be easier to define the approaches and activities for revitalisation. The latter represents an opportunity for the Račji dvor manor for the development of cultural tourism, educational programs, economic growth and the use of modern technologies. With an integrated approach that includes cultural, educational, technological and sustainable aspects, the manor can become an important centre of culture and development in the region. Further research and pilot projects in this area will be crucial for successfully implementing the revitalisation.

## 8. Literature

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