

The current situation of historical buildings in the rural environment of Romania

1. General perspective

As the classification method is faulty, the list of historical monuments does not reflect the real situation of heritage. The private residential monuments are not treated as well as the ecclesiastic ones because the families that own them were considered class enemies during the communist times. Around 6000 historical buildings were confiscated in 1949, being used in an improper manner or even destroyed.

Most of these houses are dated in the XIX century, but remain unclassified as monuments.

The surface of protected natural spaces is about 30% of the total Romanian surface, as opposed to only 0.5% for building spaces, a little over 120000 hectare

We are facing a paradox between the large capacity of the system to destroy as opposed to the equally large pride in national heritage which suggests a lack of information and education on the matter. To explain this paradox, we need to understand that the law for their protection exists, but there are not enough human resources allocated to enforce it, while the population is more and more informed and involved, thus creating a growing number of civil society initiatives on this matter. At the same time, multiple generations of specialists don't find paid work and fill the ranks of NGOs and voluntary services – see point Attitude of State

The administration does not appropriate resources – The Ministry of Culture is blocked by lack of funds – so instead of compensating by investing and working with the civil society, they prefer the oversimplification of laws – see law 50 in which they allow demolitions in protected areas without warning or consent from the Ministry.

The civil society, comprised of NGOs with interests in this field, contains a lot of experts in the field which current administration does not consider. Sadly in Romania, NGOs are considered unprofessional and are very poorly involved in public policies, hindering the execution of the policy of the state through their manifestations.

Last, but not least, there are major differences between regions in Romania. While Transylvania gets most funding and has large international support, Moldavia and Muntenia are neglected, even though there is quite a lot of potential there.

2. Legal aspects and consequences

Statistics concerning the status of ownership of buildings on the heritage list reveal the following numbers:

- o 46.5% are privately owned - this includes churches
- o 33.9% unknown
- o 17% government owned

The Romanian administration systematically block former owners of historical houses from regaining their properties and start using them. While the legislation states that if the owner is unknown, the maintenance obligations regarding a property fall to local authorities, in reality due to the duration of processing (10-15years), the houses become ruined and no intervention is allowed for lack of resources.

Thus, the property law is still unclear and the cadastral record remains incomplete.

3. Issues faced by owners

Historical houses are usually the result of accumulated wealth of the lands surrounding them. For various reasons, these lands do not belong to the owners of these houses anymore, except for small plots surrounding the building. Thus, the lands can no longer support the restoration and maintenance of these valuable heritage houses. The current situation does not provide alternative methods proposed for the survival of these houses. The only organization in Romania that is looking for solutions to this problem is the Pro Patrimonio Foundation.

Another problem is that owners are usually elderly and cannot manage to handle the economic and bureaucratic problems they face without guidance and help. A significant part of them lives abroad so it is difficult to follow their interest towards the property remotely.

State attitude

There is little to no associations of owners, due to lack of possibility, elderly age or no structured society, so they keep being ignored by the state when it comes to attributing European funds. Some heritage house owners tried to join the competition for eligibility of European funded projects but were rejected from the start by the administration for not adhering to their policy of belonging to a commercial or NGO societal group. This condition forces the owners to give up ownership for 5 years. This represents too great of a risk in the current legal landscape. This discrimination unsurprisingly leads to problems in heritage maintenance.

The only professionals that are allowed to work on heritage sites need to be accredited by the state, thus creating a little populated closed caste of people that are unable to answer the demand while the field is restricted for younger people looking to protect and create value from heritage.

3. Conclusions

Cultural landscape and the territory management have a lot to lose because of the underusage and blockage of historical buildings, which are usually in key locations, strategically placed for the organization of territory. Part of the problem is the lack of information and education, but mostly the very small number of state and local administration's human resources involved in heritage matters. However, we see a rise in the number of civil initiatives, despite the contradictory, declarative administrative initiatives.

The general view is that the Romanian state has to resolve these issues which currently seems unlikely, as it continues to create laws that are not anchored in reality.

4.4. Possible solutions

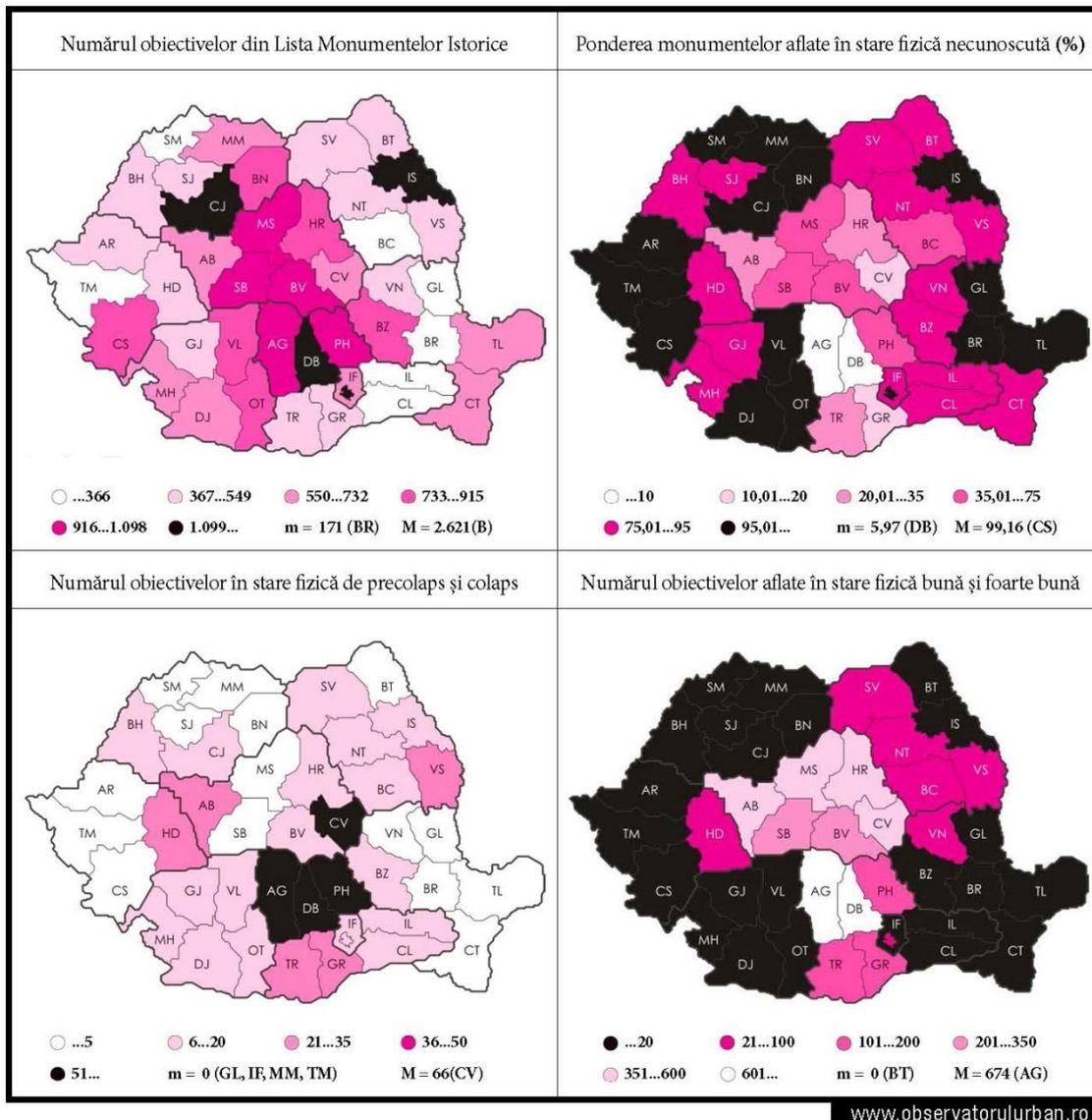
- Creating a strong, organized nucleus to represent common interests of the owners of historical houses
- Reconsidering and developing the relationship between the state and NGO projects
- The actualization and good management of a database that is both complete and up to date referring to the heritage

- Better primary education as well as forming specialists in architectural schools that are aware of the relationship of modern architecture with culturally and historically significant buildings
- Changing popular view to a more self-efficient and organized approach

Annex

General statistics – the Urban Observatory nr. 20

- upper-left: number of buildings in the Historical Monuments List
- upper-right: The percentage of monuments in an unknown state
- lower-left: Number of buildings close to or collapsed
- lower-right: Number of buildings in a good and very good state



Densitate patrimonială în țări din Europa

Punctaj mediu	Țară	Suprafață - km ² -	Populație - mil loc. -	PIB/loc. - USD -	monumente istorice (m.i.) [*]	m.i./1.000 km ²	ierarhie m.i./1.000 km ²	m.i./1.000 loc.	ierarhie m.i./1.000 loc.
14	România	238.391	19,0	12.476	19.880	83,5	13	1,04	15
16	Norvegia	385.252	5,0	47.800	6.000	15,6	18	1,20	14
4,5	Danemarca	43.094	5,6	46.600	29.000	672,9	5	5,17	4
18,5	Finlanda	338.432	5,4	38.000	2.982	8,8	19	0,55	18
2	Germania	357.121	82,0	35.539	747.970	2.094,4	2	9,12	2
2	Anglia	130.395	53,1	35.300	396.347	3.039,6	1	7,46	3
16	Franța	674.843	65,3	33.334	43.720	64,8	15	0,66	17
6	Austria	83.879	8,5	32.962	41.000	488,8	7	4,82	5
5,5	Olanda	41.543	16,7	29.412	50.048	1.204,7	3	2,99	8
6,5	Cehia	78.866	10,3	24.229	38.700	490,7	6	3,75	7
18	Portugalia	92.391	10,6	22.699	4.264	46,2	17	0,40	19
8,5	Slovacia	48.845	5,4	19.000	14.818	303,4	8	2,74	9
2,5	Slovenia	20.273	2,0	19.000	23.206	1.144,7	4	11,60	1
10	Lituania	65.200	3,2	18.278	8.649	132,6	10	2,70	10
14	Letonia	64.589	2,2	18.090	3.396	52,6	16	1,54	12
15	Turcia	780.580	74,7	16.067	65.077	83,4	14	0,87	16
12	Ungaria	93.030	10,0	15.542	12.000	129,0	11	1,20	13
9	Estonia	45.226	1,3	12.203	5.250	116,1	12	4,03	6
10	Bulgaria	110.994	7,7	12.076	19.364	174,4	9	2,61	11

Locul I Locul II Locul III Ultimul loc

- România - în ultima treime (poziția 14-15 din 19) în clasamentul densității patrimoniale (calculată în raport de suprafața și populația țării),
- Clădirile monumente istorice (m.i.) nu sunt multe raportat la suprafața țării, doar 8,35 la 100 kmp,
- Dacă ar fi egal distribuite pe teritoriul național, la fiecare 3,5 km parcurși, fie pe direcția N-S, fie pe direcția E-V, am întâlni doar o clădire m.i.
- România are cca. 1 m.i. la 1.000 de locuitori. Bucureștiul, cu 2.234 poziții în Lista Monumentelor Istorice (LMI) la cca. 2 mil. loc., este doar puțin peste media pe țară (110%).

Heritage density in European countries

- Romania is the last third (number 14-15 in 19)
- The number of historical buildings is not high related to the country's surface (just 8.35 every 100 kmp)
- If they were equally distributed on Romania's territory, we would meet just one heritage building on a perimeter of 3.5 km.
- Romania has around 1 historical building for every 1000 people. Bucharest, which has 2.234 monuments for around 2 million people, is just above the country average.

Nobiliary residencies – evaluation made by Arche (Monumente Uitate)

	Banat	Moldova	Muntenia	Transilvania	Oltenia
Total	132	124	238	371	154
Dissapeared	50%	18%	10%	1%	10%
Restaured	9%	21%	8%	19%	6%
Conserved	68%	62%	27%	64%	27%
Precolapsed	9%	10%	48%	9%	49%

Collapsed	14%	7%	17%	8%	18%
Private property	74%	40%	70%	66%	74%
State property	24%	59%	15%	33%	14%
Litigation	2%	1%	15%	1%	12%

ACTIVE NGOs IN THE FIELD OF ARCHITECTURE

1. Asociația Alba Verde
2. Asociația ARCHÉ
3. Asociația „Arhitectură. Restaurare. Arheologie”
4. Asociația Arhiterra
5. Asociația Art Conservation Support
6. Asociația București
7. Asociația Bucureștiul meu Drag
8. Asociația „Bună dimineața, București”
9. Asociația Castel Teleki – Teleki Kastély
10. Asociația „Centrul de Studii Istorice și Arhitecturale”
11. Asociația „Centrul pentru Mediul Construit”
12. Asociația Frontul Negustoresc Obor
13. Asociația Igloo Habitat & Arhitectura
14. Asociația Investitorilor din Centrul Istoric (AICI)
15. Asociația Istoria Artei
16. Asociația Kelemen Lajos pentru ocrotirea monumentelor
17. Asociația Monumente Oltenia
18. Asociația MONUMENTUM
19. Asociația Odaia Creativa
20. Asociația Peisagiștilor din România
21. Asociația pentru Arheologie Industrială
22. Asociația pentru Tranzitia Urbana
23. Agenția pentru Monitorizarea Presei – Active Watch
24. Asociația Pro-Do-Mo
25. Asociația “Pro Urbe” Arad
26. Asociația Plusminus
27. Asociația Redescoperă Vatra Dornei
28. Asociația Rhabillage
29. Asociația RPER – Rencontres du Patrimoine Europe – Roumanie
30. Asociația „R.Y.M.A.” (Revolutionary Youth Movement for Art)
31. Asociația Salvati Bucureștiul
32. Asociația Sighisoara Durabila
33. Asociația Studenților și Doctoranzilor Români din Franța – ADERF
34. Asociația Zeppelin.
35. Centrul Independent pentru Dezvoltarea Resurselor de Mediu
36. CeRe – Centrul de Resurse pentru Participare Publică
37. Freedom House Romania
38. Fundația Arhitext Design
39. Fundația JUVENTUS Alapítvány
40. Fundația „Mihai Eminescu” Trust
41. Fundația pentru arhitectură și urbanism „Simetria”
42. Fundația Pro Patrimonio
43. Fundația Calea Victoriei
44. Fundația Transilvania Trust
45. grupul informal „Alternativa pentru Monumente”
46. grupul informal „Inițiativa Favorit”
47. grupul informal „Inițiativa Prelungirea Ghencea”
48. grupul informal „Lacul Tei”
49. grupul informal „Luptăm pentru Aleea Lungulețu”
50. ICOMOS Romania

51. Ordinul Arhitecților din România
52. Organizația pentru Promovarea Transportului Alternativ în România (OPTAR)
53. Societatea Academica din România
54. Societatea Arhitecților Dâmbovița
55. Uniunea Arhitecților din România