



## PRO-EXEMPLARIA

Preventive conservation and maintenance  
of architectural heritage in Romania and  
Portugal: transmission of know-how

[www.pro-exemplaria.eu](http://www.pro-exemplaria.eu)

# Preliminary study of built heritage in Romania

- PART 2 -

Professional Training for Built Heritage in Romania

*Mars 2011*



## PRO-EXEMPLARIA

Preventive conservation and maintenance  
of architectural heritage in Romania and  
Portugal: transmission of know-how

[www.pro-exemplaria.eu](http://www.pro-exemplaria.eu)

PRO EXEMPLARIA is a European project coordinated by



and implemented in partnership with



"Ion Mincu"  
University of Architecture  
and Urbanism



*This preliminary study was conducted under the direction of National Office of Historical Monuments (INP) in cooperation with Transylvania Trust and the University of Architecture and Urbanism Ion Mincu-UAUIM (Romania).*

*It consists of two parts:*

- *Part 1 : chapters 1 to 4 (INP and Transylvania Trust)*
- *Part 2 : chapter 5 (UAUIM)*



Programme Leonardo da Vinci / Transfer of Innovation / Project n°2010-1-FR1-LEO05-14510

With the support of the Lifelong Learning Programme  
of the European Union



## Chapter 5 : Professional Training for Built Heritage in Romania

### CONTENTS

I. Professional training for certification – background -----	p. 2
II. Overview of the relationship between the present state of built heritage and the level of qualifications-----	pp. 2-4
III. The impact of the legal framework upon the attestation of heritage conservation competences -----	p. 5
IV. Broader impact of the provisions of the legislation concerning the built heritage ----	pp. 5-6
V. Legal Provisions related to the certification of specialists -----	pp. 6-11
VI. Influences of the construction market -----	pp. 11-14
VII. Data provided by the UNRMI (Romanian National Union of Restorers of Historical Monuments) -----	p. 15
VIII. Conclusions -----	pp. 15-16

## **I. Professional training for certification - background**

Although the case of Romanian national education system on cultural heritage in general shows quite a lack of forms for theoretical or practical training in the lower level, even some specialities in the field of building conservation do exist in the Romanian Code of Qualifications; some opportunities are present in the vocational training segment or in the higher education component.

Practical skills of specialised workers (as masons, carpenters or other crafts) are mainly developed in relation with building techniques for modern, contemporary constructions and usually supported by producers of certain technologies or building materials trying to make their way into the market.

At University level there are now a number of Architectural/Building History/Structural Engineering/Archaeology and Landscape Architecture degree courses available. However there is no specific module on cultural heritage. The University of Architecture and Urbanism Ion Mincu, Bucharest has its own restoration site in the citadel of Dealu Frumos, Sibiu County. The Built Heritage Conservation Training Centre at Banffy Castle, Bontida undertakes practical training for craftsmen and students as a formal part of their course.

Except for UAUIM in Bucharest, at Post Graduate level there is now only one course offering Studies in Historic Building Conservation. This is through the Babes-Bolyai University of Cluj Faculty of History and Philosophy, in association with the Transylvania Trust.

The Bucharest University of Architecture and Urbanism "Ion Mincu" (UAUIM) is organising, every 2 consecutive years, post-graduated courses (recent legislation would assimilate this into "long-life learning" concept) since 1994. UAUIM had trained mostly architects but also civil engineers, art historians and even priests dealing with heritage.

## **II. Overview of the relationship between the present state of built heritage and the level of qualifications**

A report elaborated by a commission established by the Presidency of Romania in order to assess the state of national heritage was published in September 2009. Among the components of the analysis was the level of professional training of people involved

in preservation of built heritage. This part (2<sup>nd</sup> Chapter of the Report) is relevant since it emphasizes mainly the higher education level :

- Par. 1.2.4: “deficit of education both for general public and for local administrations” in a way that lesser heritage seems to be neglected following this lack of education regarding the concept of heritage
- Par. 1.2.8 – “aggression throughout restoration and inadequate interventions”, this expression pointing to project phases or towards accomplishing those projects using under qualified personnel in the field of heritage protection

The report makes, in this way, a direct connection (when identifying causes of degradation of heritage’s state) between destruction and the level of professional training of the people involved with protection of heritage. It is though a global evaluation as it is also stressed in the document that there are not enough data available for depicting the phenomena in an accurate general manner. Emphasis on the role of the specialist with higher education is also made through the Par. 2.5.4.2 – “unprofessional interventions” where the analysis is almost exclusively related to supervisors and designers of the process and less on execution of the works. The part of the report dealing with the state of the Capital’s heritage shows that most of degradation is inflicted by material replacements – for roofs, woodwork of windows or portals and doors and for different finishing of the facades – meaning in an indirect way that the lack of appropriate materials and skilled workers (as it is pointed towards rough execution for some decorative profiles) are stimulating the destruction of Bucharest’s built heritage.

A hierarchy of professional training, in the sense of trained restorer’s background is provided as it follows:

- a) Medium, craftsmanship, technical
- b) University level
- c) Post-university level

Assessment of the first level – medium – is very brief but reveals something that would also be very obvious, that there is no coherence of the educational system providing knowledge and skills to this category of heritage professionals (as shown in the preliminary chapter).

This limits the transfer of abilities from skilled worker to apprentices mainly on the construction sites.

For the other two levels the report concludes that there is a kind of inflationist pressure on the market since there is an increasing number of graduates coming from more and more schools that do not really rely on renowned specialists or have not enough scientific substance or practical experience opportunities.

Although the report puts most of time execution of works on a lower level of interest, it shows a specific example – the restoration of a XIV th century church – where the role of craftsmen becomes noticeable since a good project was turned there into a total failure because of the manual labor quality. Even so, after unveiling such evidence – lack of specialization for restoration in polytechnic university system, most important in construction engineering – and after expressing the low importance of the domain in the architectural training, the authors of the report are considering a higher need for courses related to awareness rising for heritage destined to the general public. Professional training in college level, within special regional centers for specialties with a known deficit in Romania (such as tinwork for XIX th century roofs, carpentry, joinery for restoring windows or doors that are so important in defining the architecture of historic facades, stucco specialists for both outdoor and indoor decorative profiles) is virtually ignored through this report even if the problems were noticed before.

The Presidential Report makes clear, in a way, the present perception of the heritage specialist and its role within the society. It is perceivable a certain fracture between the noble goal of tendering heritage with specialists having higher education and the real fact that those specialists, even if not numerous, at least numerous enough compared to the acute lack of qualified workers on the construction sites. More, it is becoming obvious that the frequent changes and under financing of the higher education, along with the split of its traditional centers into many smaller centers led to a decrease of the quality of the lecturers.

Among the measures suggested for reversing this trend are the following:

- Rethinking arts and crafts training centers
- Creating regional centers for researching and promoting traditional crafts

### **III. The impact of the legal framework upon the attestation of heritage conservation competences**

The legal framework of heritage preservation has developed relatively slowly compared to the dynamics of the construction market in Romania. Today we realise that the well-known damages during the communist are almost challenged by the volume of mutilations undergone during the period of our return to democracy. One possible explanation may be the slow pace in adopting a relatively stable and operational legislation on the built heritage. Considering the analysis which is the subject of this preliminary report, two main aspects are relevant. The first is the method of implementation of the requirements relating to the specialists involved and its moment of emergence. The second is the development of the rules for their certification, both as individuals and as commercial entities.

### **IV. Broader impact of the provisions of the legislation concerning the built heritage**

The legislation adopted during 1994 and 1995 for heritage protection, established the categories of specialist and expert in protection of historical monuments.

Thus, Ordinance no. 68 of August 26, 1994 on the protection of the national cultural heritage stipulated in article 8 that, within 9 months after its publication, the Ministry of Culture had to set up a separate registry for these two categories. Furthermore, article 22 established the requirement that the design and implementation works related to historical monuments should be made only by such specialists enrolled in the respective registries.

The Law no. 41 of May 24, 1995 adopted the provisions of the ordinance, with amendments. The article 22 of the ordinance had a new form in the Ordinance no. 24 of August 21, 1997, approved by the Law 56 of March 4, 1998, as it follows:

*"The works of design, conservation, strengthening, repair, restoration, performance monitoring over time, building protection, development inside the protection area, rehabilitation and enhancement of the historical monuments, as well as the works of dismantling, restoration and relocation of historical monuments, respectively the booking, expertise works, related research may be performed only by specialists enrolled in registries established by the Ministry of Culture, according to the law, and*

*only based on the conservation and restoration procedures, approved by the National Commission of the Historical Monuments. "*

It should be noted that there was no further clarification upon the categories of specialization or training level of the contractors and that these provisions had to be related with the law no. 10 of January 18, 1995 about the quality in the construction field which established the obligation that the projects should be verified by authorized technical experts, this also being a condition for issuing building permits. As a consequence, between 1994 and 1999, the date of the first regulation of the certification, there was a long period of transition, at the edge of the law, caused by the technical inability to comply with the obligations prescribed by the laws in force at that time.

In 2006, the requirement of an authorization by the Ministry of Culture was eliminated for the restoration works for the group "B" monuments, except for the artistic components works related to these monuments.

Among such components we may include the stucco, mural painting elements or decorative plasters, stone or wood sculptures and also the elements of ornamental joinery or decorative tin parts commonly present at the roof levels, especially of those dating back from the end of the 19th century or early 20th century.

## **V. Legal Provisions related to the certification of specialists**

The certification process started relatively difficult and it took a rather long period to be effectively put into practice. Regarding this issue, it is interesting to note that the measures regarding the establishment of the framework for the certification of specialists and experts only came 10 years after the change of the political regime in 1989 but, still, before adopting the current law on the historical monuments.

The initial steps for certification were completed in 1999, amended in 2006 and modified by provisions adopted in 2003 concerning to the registry of the authorized economic operators, with supplements operated in 2006 during the EU accession process. Currently, we refer to an order of the Minister of Culture issued in 2010, which regulates the field and which amends the earlier provisions (2008).

The MC Order 2032 of July 14, 1999 on the establishment of the Commission for the Certification in the Field of Historical Monuments and approval of the procedures and criteria for the certification of experts in the historical monuments protection and of specialists in the conservation and restoration of historical monuments was the first legislative provision in this field. This act, in addition to the procedure or criteria, also established the two registries – the experts registry and the specialists registry.

An important stipulation of the order was the opening to the recognition of similar specializations in other states and the possibility to register those foreign specialists in Romanian registries for a 12-month period.

There were identified nine major areas of specialization / expertise, namely:

- a) architectural restoration;*
- b) town-planning, historical parks and gardens;*
- c) historical monuments' research;*
- d) engineering – structural improvement and/or restoration of historical structures;*
- e) engineering - services;*
- f) mural painting and wood painting restoration;*
- g) restoration of wood, stone and metal parts;*
- h) restoration of wood and stone sculptures;*
- i) archaeology –pre-history and antiquity, middle ages and the modern period.*

This explains the limitation to five groups of expertise for experts and 12 groups of specialization in the case of specialists. Further on, each of these groups of expertise/specialization was placed in the following branches:

- A - studies, investigations, researches and registering of historical monuments;*
- B – verification of projects;*
- C – complex projects leader;*
- D – project leader;*

*E – execution of works;*

*F – on-site coordination;*

*G – inspection and monitoring of historical monuments.*

The analysis of this legal procedure shows the orientation toward control tasks, development of studies and projects and less toward the segment of the actual execution of the works, a fact also reflected in the registries themselves, which actually exclude the site practitioners. Moreover, the criteria for the accreditation (art. 5 of the annex 3 of the order) was the possession of an university degree and consistent practice-based experience – 20 years and 12 works in case of experts and 7 years and 5 works in case of specialists. For specialists certified in the field of "works execution", the experience and the practice period were paradoxically shorter - 3 years and 2, respectively 3 executed works, depending on the duration of the academic education. In fact, the only certified person who does not come from a profession certified by a university degree is a master carpenter who owns a company specialized in wood conservation and has a wide national and international experience in this field, a fact which secured him a waiver.

Therefore, all specialists or experts already certified under this legal procedure are persons with higher education. They will always act as team leaders on sites or in supervisory positions or as inspectors but never in the actual area of the construction works, in positions such as: bricklayers, plasterers, stucco, joiners or carpenters, tin workers or other skilled craftsmen or artisans coordinating teams of workers.

The MCC Order 2225 of May 24, 2006 amending and supplementing the Order no. 2535 / 2003 of the Minister of Culture on the establishment of the registry of the economic operators authorized to carry on activities in the field of the historical monuments protection was a measure imposed by the EU accession negotiations.

The order was issued pursuant to the requirements for harmonization of the national legislation with the EU legislation in view of our accession in 2007. Such a change was required considering that the existing provisions are a barrier to the free movement of goods and services in the EU. Retracting the previous minister's order was avoided by introducing an extra article stipulating the automatic inclusion of the EU companies in the registry of the authorized economic operators to the extent they could

produce authorizations containing similar provisions issued in the countries of origin, thus explicitly equalling the authorization conditions imposed to Romanian companies.

The MCC Order 2226 of May 24, 2006 amending and supplementing the Order no. 2032 of 07/14/1999 issued by the Minister of Culture for the establishment of the Commission for the Certification in the Field of the Historical Monuments and the approval of procedures and criteria for the certification of experts in the historical monuments protection and of specialists in the conservation and restoration of historical monuments was a necessity resulting from the EU accession negotiations.

The same measure was proposed for companies in order to avoid an eventual "trade barrier". It was repealed the par. 2) of the art. 6 of the MCC Order no. 2032/1999, a paragraph that referred to the certification of foreign individuals.

It has been replaced with an extra article reading as follows:

*"Art 31 – The certification of individuals in the member states of the European Union who perform works for the restoration of historical monuments and their inclusion in the Registry of Specialists and in the Registry of experts and technical verifiers is automatically operated, upon submission of the certificate of practice obtained in one of the member states of the European Union, in original and legalised copy together with an exact translation into Romanian, authenticated by the competent authorities of the state issuing the respective certificate. "*

The MCC Order 2220 of April 19, 2007 approving the rules on the certification and registration in the Register of economic operators in the field of the historical monuments protection practically repealed the previous provisions issued during 2003 and the amendments operated during 2005.

The companies are classified into three groups, namely:

- research
- studies, design and technical specifications
- construction works

The conditions for the authorization are minimal as the only request for those companies is that they employ at least one expert or specialist certified by the Ministry of Culture for a period covering at least the period for which the authorization is requested.

It connects with the European legislation by referring to the European Directive 2005/36/EC on the recognition of the professional qualifications and thus enables companies in the European Union to operate on the territory of Romania provided they should meet the requirement of having a specialist whose qualifications be recognized as similar to the qualifications required for Romanian nationals under similar circumstances.

This way of presuming that a quality of the intervention on the monument will be secured is actually inefficient. The request may be easily fulfilled formally by the presence of a certified specialist who might not have the abilities needed to coordinate a team of workers that may be even unskilled for current areas such as carpentry, joinery or masonry.

The MCC Order no. 2398 of June 25, 2008 on the reorganization of the activity of certification of specialists, experts and technical verifiers in the field of the historical monuments protection and on the approval of the methodological norms on their certification was primarily an organizational transfer of the activity of certification from the Cultural Centre of Vocational Training (current name of institution subordinated to the Ministry of Culture) to the National Heritage Institute (current name of the institution subordinated to the Ministry of Culture).

In addition to its administrative aspect, fundamental changes were made to ensure a greater number of specialists and experts by reducing the compulsory experience required for the certification, by reducing the portfolio volume and by the recognition of the postgraduate or doctoral studies as years of specialized experience. In order to apply such a regulation, there was introduced the concept of "junior specialist".

This shortening of the waiting-time for those who would make an option for a career related to the heritage conservation prompted greater interest in academic courses offered both in the centre of Bucharest and in the university centre of Cluj-Napoca.

The MCC Order 2495 of August 26, 2010 set new rules in the certification field by repealing the previous order no. 2398 of June 25, 2008.

A few changes were made as to the previous situation, the most important aspect being the abolition of the newly introduced category "junior expert", the certification still

referring to specialists, experts and technical experts. The already established specializations were supplemented by those related to the restoration of glass and stained glass. The condition of 5 years of experience and a portfolio of 5 works have been kept for the specialist level, and 10 years of experience and 7 complex works for the expert level. For both levels of qualifications, long-term university education is needed.

A novelty is the introduction, following the proposition by the Certification Committee, of a list of educational institutions or public or private entities that organize professional training courses agreed upon for the certification and deemed relevant.

It is maintained the perpetuity of the certificate obtained, which may however be subject to penalties, ranging from warnings to suspension or withdrawal of the certificate.

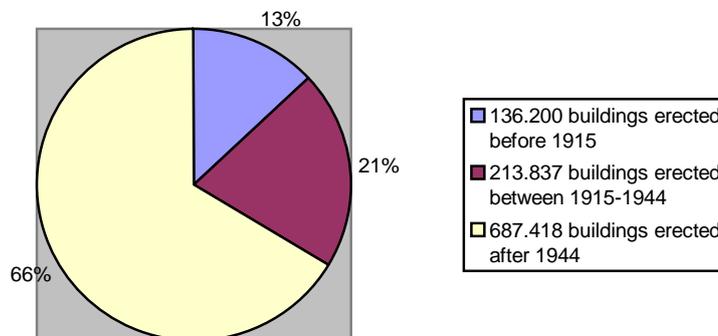
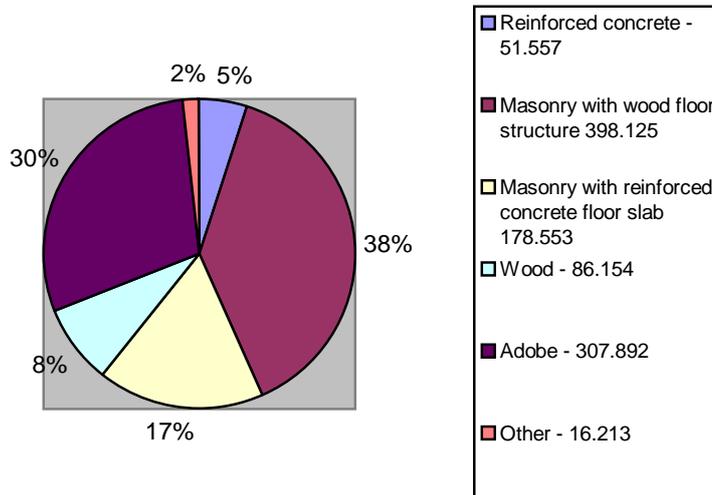
## **VI. Influences of the construction market**

The statistics in this field are relatively scarce and difficult to access. Anyhow, one can see a steady loss of skilled labour in the construction industry qualified in restoration works. The phenomenon is natural and it is linked to the massive migration, generally of the manpower, to EU countries such as Spain, Italy or France. The Romanian language is often heard on scaffolding sites in the historical centres of Florence or Venice. On the other hand, the pace of specialists' certification has been low enough in recent years and anyway, it ruled out professional categories without academic education.

On the other hand the certification process was rather slow in the last period and it didn't cover the technical level, being focused mainly upon the certification of university graduates.

The Romanian market suffers a constant development pressure for the removal of the old housing stock, including buildings or assemblies that are included in the list of historical monuments. Rehabilitation being generally estimated as more expensive, the ineffective tax incentives for the owners of culturally relevant buildings, the insufficient covering of the field by operators offering skilled manpower are unfortunately sustaining this trend.

The statistics of the constructions in Romania reveal the following aspects (source: the housing and population census - 2002):



These two charts show the large amount of buildings older than 70 years and of those made using traditional techniques - masonry (brick or clay/mud) and wooden floors or even entirely of wood. Many of them are also protected by their ranking in the list of monuments or by their inclusion into protected built areas, which leads to some partial conclusions on the professional needs to maintain the housing stock in good

condition, especially for the same statistics show the poor technical condition of at least 30% of the total inventory.

From a labour market perspective, the conservation fields are covered only by recognizing a limited number of professionals that can be encoded.

Of the trades requiring secondary education and may relate to the site practice, we can list today:

- Conservation carpenters
- Conservation joiners
- Conservation tin worker
- Conservation plasterers
- Conservation masons
- Conservation stonemasons
- Conservation mosaic inlay worker
- historical monuments restorers or conservators (although the Romanian definition is misleading as it refers to the larger group of archivists, librarians and museum curators)

All these conservation specialties have been introduced in the professional classification in 1998 by the order no. 634 of the Minister of Labour and Social Protection. There is an professional trade standard, developed in 1999, which defines the competences of a "master conservation technician of buildings" as a general rule, the differences from a regular construction technician being those related to the knowledge of some elements of restoration theory, history or architecture or structural strengthening theory. At the level of the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage, there is an institution specialized in professional training – the Vocational Training Centre in Culture. This unique specialised institution subordinated to the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage has not organized and does not organize courses for the training of undergraduate professionals.

A recent investigation among authorized design companies has revealed some aspects of assessing the qualification needs of these professionals. These, beyond the natural demand to know the conservation doctrines and to possess the capability to identify the cultural values, refer in particular to a more intense relationship between the

theoretical and practical site training, providing a richer experience through knowledge gained during study-trips and exchanges of experience in mixed teams, comprising experienced personnel mixed with workers being in the apprenticeship phase. These issues should lead to a better connection between designers and the site specialty professionals.

Unfortunately, it appears today that the practical training, linked to constructive techniques, is generally provided by companies distributing various materials and construction techniques. These companies have a natural tendency to promote specific products and not to ensure the technical foundation with general framework that an architect or an engineer should possess in connection with cultural heritage. If architects are identifiable within the occupational classification as a type called "conservation architect" (Romanian uses in fact "restoration" for what is generally recognized as "conservation" in English texts), for the structural engineers (or other specialties involved in construction industries) does not exist such a classification meaning that this way of promoting certain types of materials could be the only contact of the engineer with the specific issues of building conservation.

Despite a long period since certification exists, its conditions and the bureaucratic activity produced a lack of interest in the professional training targeted to a conservation certification. This may explain the fact that, at national level, there are still no more than 550 specialists (407) and experts (120) altogether. Moreover, the territorial distribution is quite unsatisfactory considering that there are still many counties that have only one specialist or expert within their territory.

A partial conclusion would be that there is a strong need for professional training to cover the specialties stipulated in the occupational classification for the technical staff. Providing more direct contact between the important actors of conservation works and the designers of those processes will be helpful, Organising common technical sessions, in terms of actual practical application as an eventual common module during their professional training period will be helpful also.

## **VII. Data provided by the UNRMI (Romanian National Union of Restorers of Historical Monuments)**

Unfortunately, UNRMI does not have a clear database with statistics showing the increased mobility of the skilled craftsmen, especially towards western countries. Several top members are even mentioning a real exodus in this respect.

Some statistics were provided so we might observe that the union comprises:

- 1047 skilled craftsmen are registered, 599 of them (57,2%) being under 35 of age. Among them there are only 11 tin workers, 50 joiners (cabinet makers or woodworkers), 11 stucco workers. Most of the craftsmen are carpenters and masons (100 for each specialty)
- 240 specialists with higher education, 127 of them (51,6%) being under 35 of age. Among those specialists are only one biologist and only one chemist most of the specialists (43) being architects

Having this said it is also to be considered that the special law for protecting the intangible heritage of Romania is not used yet properly by restorers. The law is aiming to preserving and developing traditional crafts and trades and identifying “Living Human Treasures”. The title was never awarded during the 4 years of the law being into force. In this context it is also distressing that an institutional platform of the Ministry of Culture, which is the Center for Professional Training in Culture, is not used at all in order to help the process of integrating the training process of craftsmen with the training of highly specialized conservators.

## **VIII. Conclusions**

One of the essential conditions appears to be the use, during interventions on historical monument, of traditional techniques and materials. From the presentation of techniques and construction materials used along the ages on Romanian territory, as well as from the analysis of the physical status of the built heritage, a statistics of the necessary intervention works may be drawn. This statistics leads to the necessity of

training of specialised personnel in, mainly, restoration of historical monuments façades as a priority.

Specialists in restoration/strengthening/completion of structural elements and finishing of the façades built out of porous materials, carpenters – specialists in restoration and completion of the roof structures of the historic monuments joiners – specialists in restoration and completion of the wood joineries of the historic monuments are needed. Due to the large stock of nineteenth century monuments, consisting in buildings with highly elaborated roofs made of decorative tin elements combined with slate or imitation of it, another valid option would be the creation of a training module for such craftsmen able to conserve and restore such roof systems.