

Week of discovering
EUROPEAN CEMETERIES
The City and Mayors
of Rijeka and Sušak

23.05.-31.05.2025.



KOZALA



The City and Mayors of Rijeka and Sušak

Final Resting Places of the City's Mayors – Rijeka and Sušak

Caring for the city's cemeteries, their maintenance and preservation, also means occasionally renewing the memory of those who have found their final resting place there. Human memory is fragile, and it is valuable to revive recollections of former residents, their lives, and their contributions.

This year, during the traditional educational cemetery walks, we pay tribute to former city leaders—dedicated individuals who played a key role in shaping Rijeka into the city we know today...

Rijeka's history is complex yet fascinating, marked by frequent historical shifts that left a strong imprint on its citizens. These changes often reflected in the election of leaders and their efforts to organize urban life. A great share of this responsibility was carried by the city's mayors. Since the early 19th century, Rijeka has had 26 mayors, beginning with Paolo Scarpa, and continuing to the present day.

Over the years, the city underwent changes in name, political systems, and even territorial affiliations. Early mayors governed the residents of the small town of Fiume or the divided communities of Trsat and Sušak, until the final unification of Rijeka, led by its first post-war mayor, Klausberger (1948–1952).

Today, some of these mayors rest at the Kozala and Trsat cemeteries, buried either in family tombs or in graves provided by the city. Their final resting places differ in location, design, size, and artistic authorship, but each one commemorates the life that left a mark on the dynamic and often turbulent history of Rijeka and its surroundings.

A close-up photograph of a light brown, textured surface, possibly a piece of stone or concrete. The surface features several large, circular indentations or recessed areas. The texture is granular and slightly uneven. A yellow rectangular label with the word "Kozala" is positioned in the upper right quadrant. A white crosshair is visible on the right side of the image, consisting of a vertical line and a horizontal line intersecting.

Kozala



KOZALA | F-105



Paolo Scarpa
(1765.-1837.)



In 1778, the Venetian merchant Paolo Scarpa, father of the famous and respected Rijeka merchant, politician and benefactor Iginio (Higin, Higinio) Scarpa (Rijeka, 11 June 1794 - Rijeka, 16 May 1866), moved from Venice to Rijeka. He arrived with his two brothers, Vincenzo and Antonio. In 1787, Paolo Scarpa ran and owned a trading company with Carlo Muschler. He became a citizen of Rijeka in 1798, and was appointed a city councilor in 1803. From 1802, he was the vice-consul of Naples, and from March 1812 he was a mayor of Rijeka during the French administration. He fled the city after the English naval squadron attacked Rijeka in 1813. Following these events, in August 1813, he was removed from office. In 1785, he married Marija Tomašić (Tomasich), originally from Opatija, with whom he had a son, Iginio.



Giuseppe Agostino Tosoni
(1804.-1852.)



A patrician and a city judge (*Giudice rettore comunitativo primo*), he was an advocate of the idea that the prosperity for Rijeka lies in a direct connection with Hungary. From 1832 to 1836, he served as Rijeka's representative in Bratislava Parliament. On 27 June 1848, the Royal Hungarian Palatine appointed him Vice-Captain (Vice Capitanato) and its territory. This was crucial in the actual management of the municipality, as the Vice-Captain practically managed the city council on behalf of the governor and captain. On 31 August 1848 he lost his mandate due to the fact that the patrician ruling group in the Rijeka City Council refused to recognize the authority of Croatia, led by the civic Parliament. At that point, the city of Rijeka was occupied by Croatian troops under the command of Josip Bunjevac, the deputy prefect of Zagreb County and a representative of Count Josip Jelačić.



Giovanni de Ciotta
(1824. - 1896.)



He finished high school in Rijeka and graduated from the prestigious Military Academy in Vienna. During the revolutionary years of 1848 and 1849, he fought in Italy and continued his military service in Verona and Venice. After the Battle of Solferino in 1859, he left the military and returned to Rijeka. Politically, he advocated the autonomy of Rijeka through stronger ties with Hungary, recognizing the city's favorable geographical and economic position. In 1869, he represented Rijeka in the Hungarian Parliament. Ciotta became the head of the Rijeka division of the Hungarian Liberal Party. During his long, successful term as a mayor, from 1872 to 1896, he initiated the town-planning for the period 1872-1874, a large-scale embankment of the coastline, and the construction of port piers. Rijeka gained a modern port infrastructure, a new railway station and rail connections to Vienna, Budapest, Ljubljana, Zagreb, and Trieste. Institutions such as the Natural History Museum, the City Museum, the Municipal Theatre, the cultural organisation "Literary Circle", a public library and significant art collections were founded. His period in the office is considered as the "golden years", also referred to as the "Idyll" and "Il Magnifico podesta". At that time, there were 22 consulates, about twenty hotels and even nine cinemas in Rijeka. In 1896, he resigned due to disagreement with the centralist Hungarian politics which he saw as a threat to Rijeka's autonomy. Emperor Franz Joseph I awarded him the Order of Saint Stephen, while the king of Italy honored him with the Order of Saints Maurice and Lazarus. He retired from public life in Lovran, where he lived until his death in 1903.

KOZALA | A-7-4



Hinko Bačić
(1857.-1918.)



He was born in Rijeka in 1857 and died in Sušak in 1918. He came from a prominent family of wholesalers. Having inherited a substantial fortune, he expanded the family business - he owned a mill and a dough factory in Senj, a large estate and four houses in Sušak, as well as several plots of land in Sveta Lucija in Kostrena. In 1887, he was elected the first mayor of the newly established Municipality of Sušak (formerly Trsat) and held the office until 1907. Throughout those twenty years, he never raised his salary, but invested in municipal needs instead. He used his own money to purchase land, which he then donated to the municipality. He was the driving force behind a number of important undertakings: setting up street and road regulation, the installation of gas lighting, the construction of water supply, sewage system, the spiral railway tunnel in Brajdica, the embankment of Brajdica and Delta, and the development of the port, schools, swimming pools and cemeteries. He strongly supported education: a new building for the First Croatian Gymnasium of Sušak was built, a Girls' High School, a Trade Academy and several primary schools were founded. He also established the County Court and Tax Office in Sušak, and was the initiator and the founder of the Savings Bank for Primorje, of which he was the president for many years. He built the monumental Continental Hotel in 1887 (the so-called Bačić Palace).





Michele Maylender
(1863.-1911.)



Michele Maylender was a highly respected politician and one of the most influential figures of his time. After completing his education in Rijeka, he continued his studies in Kolozsvár and later in Budapest, where he studied law. In 1888, at the age of only 25, he earned a doctorate in law, and in 1890, at the age of 27, he passed the bar exam. In 1893, Maylender was one of the founders of the Literary Circle, which became the most prominent Italian cultural gathering place in Rijeka. In 1896, seeking greater autonomy from the centralized authorities, he became actively involved in local politics. In 1897, as a member of the municipal council, he was elected mayor (succeeding Ciotta), but he refused to take the oath and comply with the laws imposed on Rijeka. Due to major political changes and the dismissal of the municipal council, royal commissioner Antonio de Vallentsits was appointed by decree in 1898 to replace him. Maylender was confirmed as mayor for the sixth time in 1901. However, before the parliamentary elections, he resigned and withdrew from public life. His role within the Autonomist Party was taken over by Riccardo Zanella. In 1911, he returned to politics and accepted the candidacy as Rijeka's representative in the Hungarian Parliament. He was elected but died suddenly of a stroke in Budapest later that same year.



Antonio de Vallentsits
(1829.-1902.)



Born in Ilirska Bistrica in 1829 into a noble family, Antonio de Vallentsits studied law and, as a young student and cadet at the Theresian Military Academy, was known for his opposition to the Metternich's policies. He retired from military service in 1888 with the rank of field marshal-lieutenant. In 1898, when the Hungarian government established a new administrative body for Rijeka, Vallentsits was appointed mayor and royal commissioner for the city, a position he held until 1900. A prominent figure in Rijeka's public life, he also served as ministerial advisor, imperial-royal chamberlain, vice-governor of Rijeka, and vice-president of the Rijeka branch of the Red Cross. He was awarded honorary citizenship of Rijeka. Antonio de Vallentsits died in Rijeka in 1902. He was buried at Kozala Cemetery in a family tomb bearing the coat of arms of the noble Vallentsits family, originally granted to Anton Vallentsits the Elder (1796–1892).



Francesco Vio
(1863.-1954.)



A lawyer and moderate member of the Autonomist Party, Francesco Vio succeeded Michele Maylender in 1901 as both mayor of Rijeka and party president. Due to ill health, he soon resigned, but after recovering, the Representative Council (*Rappresentanza civica*) re-elected him as mayor in 1910. He held the office successfully until his final resignation in 1913. Vio was actively involved in Rijeka's cultural life. He was one of the founders of the Literary Circle (*Circolo letterario*), serving as both its secretary and first president. Active from 1893 to 1914, the Circle was the city's most prominent cultural association. It brought together Italian intellectuals who gave lectures on Italian literature, published the journals *La vita fiumana* (Riječki život) and *La Vedetta* (Straža), and organized poetry festivals at the city theatre. Francesco Vio was laid to rest in the neo-Gothic Bakarčić-Vio mausoleum, designed by architect Giuseppe Dorig and sculptor Donato Barcaglia.



Francesco Gilberto Corossacz
(1856.-1942.)



Francesco Gilberto Corossacz was a banker, politician, industrialist, and Danish honorary consul. He served as mayor of Rijeka from 1914 to 1915 and is buried at Kozala Cemetery (D-5-15). A supporter of Rijeka's autonomy and a noted Italophile, Corossacz was elected vice-president of the city council several times before becoming mayor in 1914. He also served as honorary consul of the Kingdom of Denmark from 1914 until 1939. The Corossacz family—originally Korošac, meaning “a man from the Slovenian province of Carinthia”—was first recorded in Rijeka at the end of the 17th century. The family was active in banking, wholesale trade, and shipping. They commissioned the construction of Villa Corossacz, a residential building designed by architect Emilio Ambrosini. It was located in the former Via della Salute (now Laginjina Street) which is today Ivan Matetić Ronjgov Music School.

KOZALA | D-5-15





Pietro Klausberger

(1906.-1981.)



Pietro Klausberger was born in 1906 into a modest Italian family in Rijeka. At the age of 12, he began working as a blacksmith's apprentice, later training as a carpenter and painter. From an early age, he embraced anti-fascist ideas. During World War II, meetings of the Resistance were held in his apartment. In 1944, he became a member of the City Committee of the Communist Party, responsible for coordinating underground activities. Due to his involvement, the SS placed him on their wanted list. After a series of raids, he fled to partisan-held territory, where he joined the District Committee of the Communist Party. After Rijeka was liberated from German forces on May 3, 1945, Klausberger became a member of the City People's Committee and soon assumed its presidency. Following the official unification of Rijeka and Sušak, he became the first mayor of the united city in 1948. He led Rijeka through a challenging post-war reconstruction period. Later, he served as a representative in the Croatian Parliament and for three terms in the Yugoslav Parliament. Klausberger was also the founder and first president of the *Luben* Fishing Association and served as vice-president of NK Kvarner (later renamed Football Club Rijeka).





Eduard / Edo Jarđas
(1901.–1980.)

Eduard Jarđas was born in Zamet in 1901. He graduated from the Vocational Trade School in Celje and completed his apprenticeship in Rijeka. In 1926, he emigrated to Canada, where he worked on the railways and as a lumberjack, fisherman, and miner. In 1929, he joined the Communist Party in Canada and became the editor of the Croatian newspapers *Nezaposleni radnik* and *Borba*. In 1937, he organized a group of 27 anti-fascist volunteers and went to fight in the Spanish Civil War, where he served as a company commander. After being seriously wounded, he returned to Toronto, where he continued his editorial work with *Slobodna misao*, *Hrvatski radnički kalendar*, and *Novosti*. He also served as secretary of the Union of Canadian Croats and actively advocated for the international recognition of the Yugoslav Partisan movement during World War II. After the war, Jarđas returned to Yugoslavia and held numerous important positions: Assistant Minister for Foreign Trade, Advisor at the Yugoslav Embassy in New Delhi, President of the People's Committee of the City and District of Rijeka, Representative in the Federal Assembly, and member of both the Central Committee of the Croatian Communist Party and the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia. In 1979, he received the City of Rijeka Award for Lifetime Achievement.

KOZALA | B-2-1





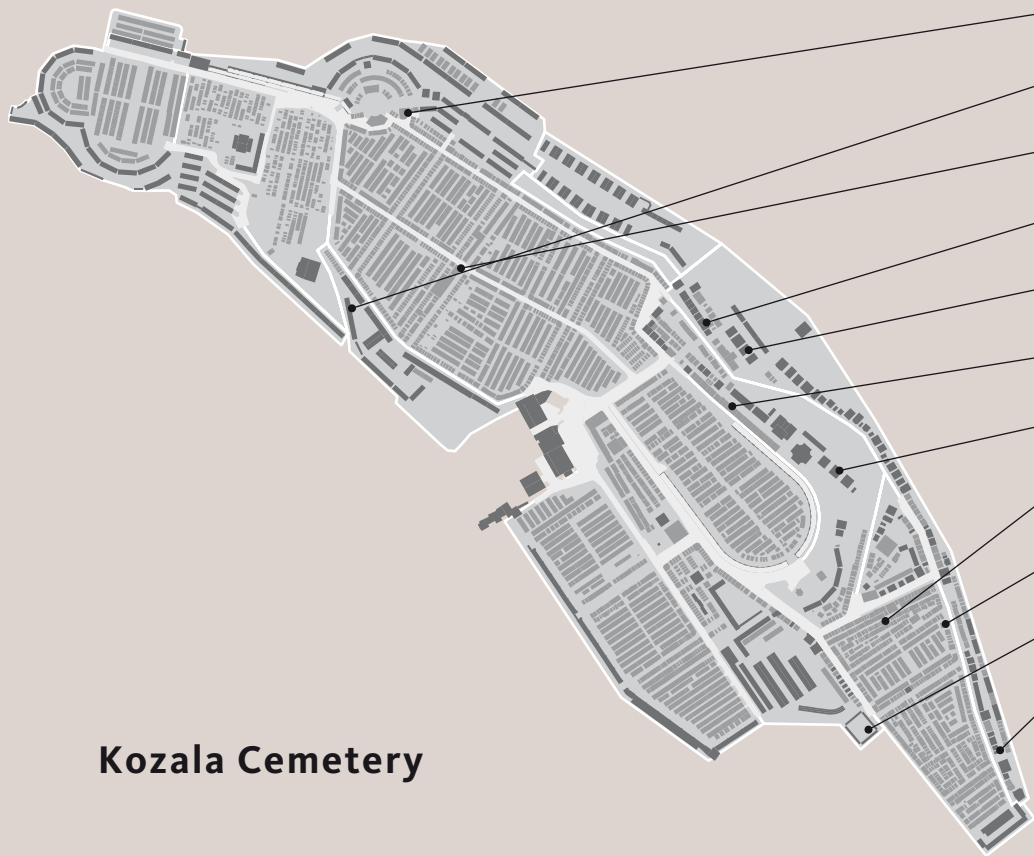
KOZALA | A-8-115



Sergije Lukeš
(1930.-1982.)



Sergije Lukeš was born in 1930 in Rijeka, where he completed high school. In 1956, he graduated from the Faculty of Mechanical Engineering and Naval Architecture in Zagreb. He began his professional career at the Viktor Lenac Shipyard, where he worked until 1974, including a period as the Shipyard's director. From 1974 to 1979, he served as president of the Management Board of Jadranbrod, and until 1982, as deputy president of the Management Board of the 3. maj Shipyard. In 1982, he was elected president of the Rijeka Municipal Assembly. He was also an active member of the Municipal Committee of the League of Communists of Croatia, known as SKH, in Rijeka and the president of the Municipal Board of the Socialist Alliance of Working People of Croatia (SSRNH). From 1965 to 1969, he served as a member of the Croatian Parliament. Additionally, he was president of the Publishing Council of the Rijeka magazine Argumenti and of the Jadran Rowing Club. In 1984, he was posthumously awarded the City of Rijeka Award for his contributions to the development of domestic shipbuilding and maritime affairs.



Antonio de Vallentsits

KOZALA | J-2-27

Pietro Klausberger

KOZALA | N-8-693

Michele Maylender

KOZALA | M-5-33

Giuseppe Agostino Tosoni

KOZALA | B-6-10

Hinko Bačić

KOZALA | B-5-2

**Francesco Gilberto
Corrosacz**

KOZALA | D-5-15

Francesco Vio

KOZALA | D-3-3

Sergije Lukeš

KOZALA | A-8-115

Giovanni de Ciotta

KOZALA | A-7-45

Paolo Scarpa

KOZALA | F-105

Eduard/Edo Jardas

KOZALA | B-2-1

Kozala Cemetery



Trsat



Stanko Lukanović
(1839. - 1912.)

TRSAT | B-3-19

In 1876, Stanko Lukanović, a Rijeka County clerk and member of the Party of Rights (*Pravaši*), was appointed mayor of Trsat. That same year, the areas of Kostrena Sv. Lucija, Kostrena Sv. Barbara, and Draga were annexed to the Sušak–Trsat municipality, which now stretched from the left bank of the River Rječina to Bakar. The expansion and development of this part of the town prompted the relocation of the municipal seat to Sušak in 1877. As mayor, Lukanović launched several initiatives crucial to the progress, including a public call for the Brajdica urban development plan and the construction of a water supply system from the Zvir spring, located near the paper factory. He gave his full attention to education, supporting the work of the Croatian Elementary School, founded in 1875, and overseeing the establishment of the first elementary school for girls. Under his leadership, Sušak became a stronghold of Starčević's Party of Rights in the Primorje region. In 1878, the political newspaper *Sloboda*—the party's official publication—was launched, followed by the literary magazine *Hrvatska vila* in 1882. In early 1888, the bilingual newspaper *Nepristran–L'imparziale* began publication, of which Lukanović was the publisher and editor.





TRSAT | B-4-1



Gjuro Ružić, Senior
(1834.-1922.)



Gjuro Ružić, Sr. was a landlord and politician, born in Hreljin in 1834. He served as mayor of Sušak from 1907 to 1909. Ružić received no formal education in his youth, as he had to work from an early age. He learned to read and write only at the age of eighteen. As a young man, he worked in Senj tanning and finishing leather. Later, he opened an inn, which he ran with his wife Barbara Burić, a schoolteacher from Šmrika. Determined to improve his craft, Ružić traveled to Hamburg to study leather technology, and then to Genoa, where he became the manager—and eventually a business partner—of leather magnate Seemann. His greatest business success came with large-scale leather deliveries for laborers working on the construction of the Suez Canal. Ružić became one of the most prominent property owners in Sušak, owning around forty houses, including twenty-two that he built himself. After the death of his first wife Barbara in 1886, he remarried Jelka Badovinac, the daughter of Nikola Badovinac, court advisor and former mayor of Zagreb.



Gjuro Ružić, Junior
(1891.-1976.)



Gjuro Ružić Jr. (also known as Đuro or Jurica), son of Gjuro Ružić Sr., was a politician and served as mayor of Sušak from 1929 to 1939, emerging as one of the most influential figures of the period between two wars. He completed his studies in economics in London. Alongside his brother, Dr. Viktor Ružić, he played a key role in several major infrastructure and cultural projects, including the development of the port and railway network, the construction of the Adriatic Highway to Jablanac, Grobnik Airport, the seaplane base at Pećine, as well as the Croatian Cultural Center in Sušak and the iconic Neboder Hotel. In 1936, he established the Vienna-Klagenfurt-Ljubljana-Sušak air route. In addition to his political work, Ružić served as a hunting inspector within the Forestry Inspectorate of the Rijeka District Assembly. He passed away in 1976 and was laid to rest in the family tomb, sculpted by the renowned artist Ivan Rendić.

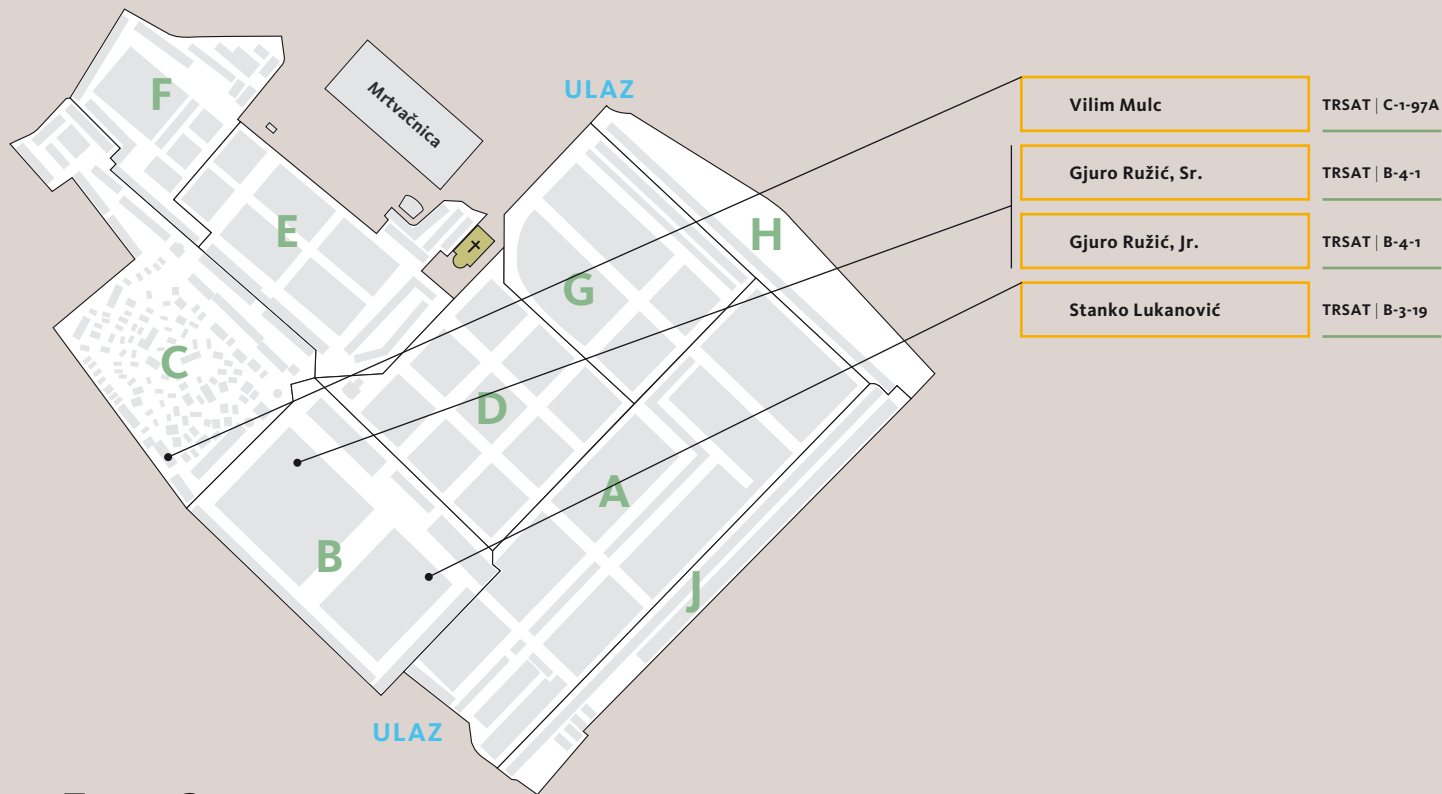


Vilim Mulc
(1928.-2006.)



Vilim Mulc was born in 1928 in the village of Divjake near Skrad. During World War II, he joined the Partisan forces. He began his education at the Teacher Training School in the liberated territory of Delnice and completed his studies in Kastav in 1948. His professional career started as director of the Student Dormitory of the Rikard Benčić Industrial School in Rijeka, followed by positions as a teacher at Orehovica Elementary School and later as principal of Centar Elementary School. From 1958 to 1968, he worked as a political official. During this time, he earned a degree from the College of Economics in Zagreb. In 1968, he was appointed director of the Novi list Newspaper and Publishing Company, and later that same year became director of the Rijekatekstil company. Afterward, he returned to a political career. He was the president of FC Rijeka (1969–1971). From 1974 to 1976, Mulc served as secretary of the Municipal Committee of the League of Communists of Croatia (SKH) in Rijeka, and from 1977 to 1978, as president of the Municipal Conference of the SKH. In 1982, he became a member of the Council of Municipalities in the Croatian Parliament and a member of the Presidency of the Central Committee of the SKH. He also served as the Republic Secretary for Internal Affairs (1984–1990).





Trsat Cemetery





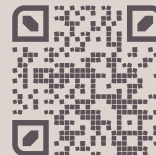
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This text refers to publicly available materials and articles about the city mayors, including those published on the official website of the City of Rijeka.

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TRANSLATION: Smart studio j.d.o.o. Rijeka
2025 edition



Cultural route
of the Council of Europe
Itinéraire culturel
du Conseil de l'Europe



