



**FABLAB.HR**

ASSOCIATION FOR THE PROMOTION OF DIGITAL FABRICATION

FABLAB CROATIA • PEOPLE • PLACES • POLICY

# Adaptive reuse across Croatia

Four abandoned public sites — a 100 ha factory, an island youth centre, a village school and a modernist hospital — and the community future we propose for each.

PLACES PUBLICATION • 2026 • CROATIA

**From a completed proof of concept in Grobnik to Mediterranean-scale ambition in Krvavica — each conversion turns an idle public site into productive community infrastructure.**

# Idle public buildings, brought back to use

Across Croatia, public buildings outlive their original purpose and fall idle for decades — a 100 ha factory, an island youth centre, a village school, a modernist hospital. FabLab works with municipalities and EU programmes to convert these sites into productive **community infrastructure** rather than leaving them to decay.

Each location is assessed the same way: the resident-focused issue it could solve, the expected outcome of reuse, and the local partners who make it happen. The four sites span the full arc — from a completed proof of concept to a Mediterranean-scale ambition.

|                                                                                                |                                                                                        |                                                                                    |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>01 · Resident-focused issue</b><br>What community problem the abandoned site could address. | <b>02 · Expected outcome</b><br>The productive future use we propose for the building. | <b>03 · Local partners</b><br>Owners, municipalities and programmes delivering it. |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

## The four locations

|                     |                                                         |              |
|---------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| ● <b>Sljeme</b>     | 100 ha former meat factory → Fab City HUB               | Proposed     |
| ● <b>Prvić Luka</b> | Former youth & astronomy centre → Adriatic GreenLab     | In Brussels  |
| ● <b>Grobnik</b>    | Former village school → Centre for creativity & science | Done 2025/26 |
| ● <b>Krvavica</b>   | Former children's hospital → European Heritage Lab      | Invited 2026 |

# Sljeme — Fab City HUB

● Croatia · City of Zagreb · Sesvete district

Former meat factory · 100 ha · abandoned 20 yrs



[Open in Google Maps ↗](#)



## RESIDENT-FOCUSED ISSUE

Sesvete (~100,000 residents) would be Croatia's third-largest city, yet has no real centre and lacks essential public services — police, medical, cultural. The 100 ha former meat-factory complex sits abandoned for 20 years, fully owned by the City of Zagreb.

## EXPECTED OUTCOME

Revitalise the complex into a **Fab City HUB** — a productive neighbourhood centre: a maker & innovation hub in the former HQ (3,500 m<sup>2</sup>), a music school in the storage hall (9,000 m<sup>2</sup>), and an art depot in the concrete silos — finally giving Sesvete the centre it never had.

## LOCAL PROJECT PARTNERS

● City of Zagreb (owner)

● EU Horizon — CENTRINNO

● EU Horizon — proGleg

● Novi prostori kulture

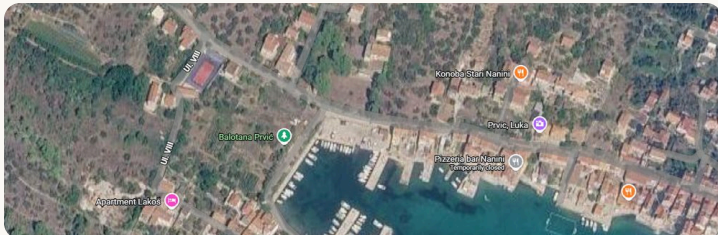
● U zelene i plave Sesvete

● Fablab

# Adriatic GreenLab

● Croatia · Šibenik-Knin · Prvić Luka (Vodice)

Former youth & astronomy centre · abandoned 10 yrs



[Open in Google Maps ↗](#)



## RESIDENT-FOCUSED ISSUE

Croatia has ~1,000 islands; a century ago 100 were inhabited, now fewer than 50. A former youth & astronomy centre on Prvić has stood abandoned for 10 years while remote island communities keep shrinking.

## EXPECTED OUTCOME

Convert it into **Adriatic GreenLab** — a living lab for remote areas, testing sustainable year-round island life and reversing depopulation. The proposal has been presented twice in Brussels (2019, 2022).

## LOCAL PROJECT PARTNERS

● Town of Vodice

● Otok — Faust Vrančić (NGO)

● Fablab

# Grobnik Centre for Creativity

● Croatia · Primorje-Gorski kotar · Grobnik (Čavle)

Former school → community centre • done 2025/26



[Open in Google Maps ↗](#)



## RESIDENT-FOCUSED ISSUE

Small settlements lose their public buildings and footfall. A former primary school sat unused, and the area's historic fortifications attracted little economic activity.

## EXPECTED OUTCOME

First completed transformation (2025/26): former school → **Centre for creativity and science promotion**. A replicable model that draws visitors to the old fortifications and creates demand for food, hospitality and broader revitalisation.

## LOCAL PROJECT PARTNERS

● Municipality of Čavle

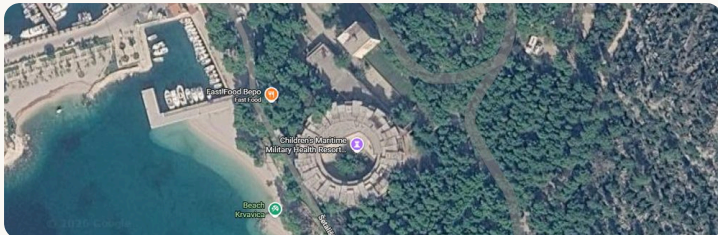
● CKZ Grobnik

● Fablab

# Krvavica — European Heritage Lab

● Croatia · Split-Dalmatia · Krvavica (Makarska)

Former children's hospital · abandoned 30 yrs



[Open in Google Maps ↗](#)



## RESIDENT-FOCUSED ISSUE

An architecturally significant former children's hospital has been abandoned for 30 years despite repeated bottom-up initiatives along the Makarska coast.

## EXPECTED OUTCOME

Transform it into a **European learning centre** for heritage-to-innovation conversion, anchoring the **Mediterranean Makers Initiative** as a hub for the whole Mediterranean basin. Fablab was invited to propose in May 2026.

## LOCAL PROJECT PARTNERS

● Town of Makarska

● Mediterranean Makers Initiative

● Fablab

# Four locations at a glance

| LOCATION                                                                       | RESIDENT-FOCUSED ISSUE                                                                              | EXPECTED OUTCOME                                                                      | PARTNERS                                       |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|
| <div><div></div><div><b>Sljeme</b></div><div>Zagreb · Sesvete</div></div>      | 100 ha City-owned factory, abandoned 20 yrs; Sesvete (~100k) has no centre or core public services. | <b>Fab City HUB</b> — maker hub, music school & art depot give Sesvete a real centre. | City of Zagreb · CENTRINNO · proGgreg · Fablab |
| <div><div></div><div><b>Prvić Luka</b></div><div>Vodice · Šibenik</div></div>  | Island depopulation; former youth & astronomy centre empty 10 yrs.                                  | <b>Adriatic GreenLab</b> — living lab for sustainable, year-round island life.        | Vodice · Otok-Faust Vrančić · Fablab           |
| <div><div></div><div><b>Grobnik</b></div><div>Čavle · Primorje</div></div>     | Unused village school; heritage fortifications draw little activity.                                | <b>Centre for creativity &amp; science</b> (done 2025/26) — a replicable model.       | Čavle · CKZ Grobnik · Fablab                   |
| <div><div></div><div><b>Krvavica</b></div><div>Makarska · Dalmatia</div></div> | Landmark former children's hospital, abandoned 30 yrs.                                              | <b>European heritage-to-innovation centre</b> ; Mediterranean Makers hub.             | Makarska · Mediterranean Makers · Fablab       |

## *Notes*