

8. Halele Carol

(Bucharest, Romania)

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1 Introduction

[Halele Carol](#) represents one of the most well-known adaptive re-use projects in Bucharest. The former factory hall is located in a still-running industrial complex with an impressive history. The now - Hesper factory continues its activity in the oldest industrial area in Bucharest next to Carol Park, a former innovation area which drove the city's economy at the end of 19th century. Over time, the factory stopped using several of the old halls and moved to the more modern ones, built in the 20th century. Halele Carol is a project that evolved organically, through the initiative of local cultural actors who wanted to show the potential of industrial heritage and of the area for Bucharest. Through temporary-use functions and small investments, the project opened the old halls gradually to the public through creative events, bringing the creative class of Bucharest towards the southern part of the city, which lacked the same attractiveness as the more-popular center. Nowadays, the main renter of Halele Carol is [Expirat Club](#), one of the preferred leisure places in Bucharest for the young, alternative crowd. The story of Halele Carol is still to be developed, as new initiatives are needed to take the place to the next level.



Picture 1. Hesper S.A., view from the street

2 Timeline

The timeline of the adaptive re-use process at Halele Carol can be summarized as follows:

1869	The construction of the Filaret train station, first train station in Bucharest
1887	
1906	Construction of the Wolff factory
1948	Construction of the Carol park - opened for the "World Expo" of 1906
	The factory gets nationalized during communism and it is named the Red Star. Various modern buildings are built on site and the production activity moves there.
1989	
2001	The factory gets privatized and renamed to Hesper S.A.
2001-2011	First workshop on industrial heritage in Romania. Occasional discussions with the factory owner, building mutual trust. Many architecture students did diploma work on the site.
2011	Tour organized by Zeppelin on industrial heritage in Romania.
2013	Creative Factories project - workshop with owner, Romanian and Dutch experts; Dutch ambassador visits sites. Defining the methodology and building trust.
2013	Cleaning up the site, making it safe, reparations: done by initiators & factory personnel.
2014	Opening factory to the public – during Romanian Design Week – 2000 visitors
2015	Design Post-Industry project – increase attractiveness area ; Architecture interventions by Romanian and Norwegian architects and artists
2015	Various events. Positioning the building as a new cultural hotspot in Bucharest
2015	Hesper factory makes small investments in the garden
2015	The temporary programming of the site stops after a fire takes place in another transformed factory in Bucharest (Colectiv Club)
2016	Expirat Club moves in Halele Carol

3 Story of the building

"The whole place was really great. It is separated from the park by a wall, but you can really feel the connection with the park. And I was amazed that this place was staying empty there. I really saw the potential of the site." Meta van Drunen

In 1869, the first train station of Romania was opened in Bucharest, on the Filaret hill. Following the train station, several factories and innovation institutes were relocated or constructed on the hill, transforming it into the most important innovation district in Bucharest.

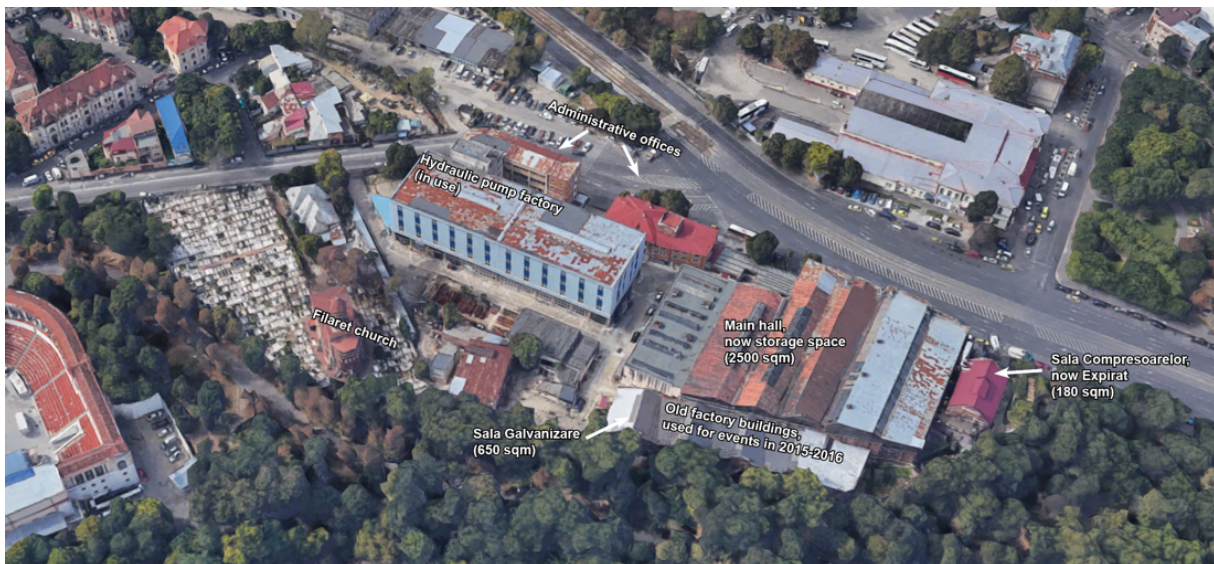
In 1887, the Wolff factory also relocated on the Filaret hill. The factory was already producing bandages since 1877 and it was owned by a swiss engineer, Erhardt Wolff. After the relocation, the factory expended the production activities to include

warfare machines, installations for steam locomotives and brass and bronze foundries. A few years later, in 1906, the Carol Park is opened on the hill adjacent to the factory – an impressive outdoor exhibition space built in the honour of King Carol's 40th year of reign. In 1921, the factory was directly connected to the railway station Filaret to provide equipment for the army.

During the communist regime, the factory was nationalized and became state property. The name is changed to 'Red Star' (*Steaua Rosie*) and it started producing heavy machinery for the construction industry and hydraulic equipment.

After the fall of the communist regime, the factory became a joint-stock company (*societate pe actiuni*), however with one majoritarian owner. In the present day, the factory still produces hydraulic pumps and engines under the name of Hesper S.A. It is one of the last active factories in Bucharest and definitely the last one in the area. However, the factory has had drastic personnel cuts and is struggling with the degrading condition of the buildings.

"We were invited by Zeppelin to have a look at this space that is somewhere in the centre of Bucharest and it is standing empty for some years already. They were searching for some ideas how to renovate or how to revigorate this area. So we went there and we were absolutely impressed by the place and we immediately saw the potential of the rooms, of the big hall, of the smaller rooms underneath the hall..." Joep de Roo



Picture 2. Google Earth Satellite view of current factory site.

The building is a site with industrial heritage value, although not listed as a national monument. In 1921, the terrain had a surface of 15.000 m². Several constructions can be currently found in the site, with different construction years as follows:

- 1899 – various constructions. Only one is still standing, in the South side of the terrain, next to the Filaret Church (Biserica Cuțitul de Argint).
- 1905 – The old factory buildings facing Carol Park
- 1936 – Main hall and the power plant in the North Side
- 1939-1943 – many small extensions. Many will be demolished in 1978
- 1978 - multi-storey hall from reinforced concrete
- End 1980 – a hall made of prefabricated reinforced concrete

The main hall is now used as a storage space for old machinery from the last century. The reinforced concrete building is still used by [Hesper SA](#) to produce hydraulic pumps. The initiators from [Zeppelin](#) and [Eurodite](#) opened the old factory building and Sala Compressoarelor for events in the period of 2014-2016. Currently, Expirat Club functions in Sala Compressoarelor.



Picture 3. Prism installation at Halele Carol by Zeppelin and Eurodite

4 The initiative

"The idea was that we would develop it step by step. As you can see, it is a big space, there are a lot of halls that need renovation, so it would need a big investment and there is... at the moment we didn't and we still don't have that amount of money to invest. So the idea was that we do a step by step renovation, trying to program it, having events here and then with the money that we'd earn through the events we could start renovating it. Through kind of an organic model. That was the model that we had in mind when we started in 2011." Joep de Roo

In 2001, Irina Iamandescu, a heritage expert working at the [Ministry of Culture](#), started introducing the topic of industrial heritage in Bucharest. Before this, there was very little consideration for factories as heritage. She organised a workshop on industrial heritage and also started to get in touch with the owners of the various factories in the Filaret hill area.

"When I wrote my diploma in '97 on the Filaret Electrical Plant (another industrial site in the area), I was asked by the commission of architects: 'where is this factory? Is this in Bucharest?' So it was sort of like untouched territory." Irina Iamandescu

In 2011, the architecture magazine Zeppelin, together with Irina Iamandescu organised a guided tour to various industrial heritage sites in Bucharest. Almost 200 people participated. It started a discussion about the possibilities to reintegrate these sites into the city life as cultural and creative centres.

"I knew that there were funds, or a subsidy available in the Netherlands for the creative industries, and I started to make a project together with Constantin. About

how can we arrange a sort of knowledge exchange and share expertise, to improve the factory and to kickstart the process of transformation. In order to make the application, we also involved the Dutch embassy already.” Meta van Drunen

In 2013, the [Creative Industries Fund NL](#) in the Netherlands opened a call for stimulating knowledge exchange in the creative industries between Dutch experts and international sites. Eurodite and Zeppelin developed a project called [“Creative Factories Bucharest”](#) in 2013. The project obtained funds from the Creative Industries Fund NL to bring Dutch experts to Romania to showcase some best practices and examples of successful transformations of industrial heritage sites. Among them was Liesbeth Jansen, the former director of Westergasfabriek in Amsterdam, a famous example of industrial heritage re-use through temporary functions.

Step by step renovation = to transform and upgrade the buildings gradually on the base of available capacity and funds at that moment. By organising events and subsidies, relatively small amounts of money are raised which can be invested into upgrading the buildings and surrounding spaces.

In a two-day workshop, the owner, together with Romanian and Dutch experts, addressed several transformation scenarios. The team opted to transform the building using an organic transformation process and several temporary functions. This workshop was also a key moment in developing a relationship of trust between the initiators and the owner of the factory.



Picture 4. Industrial Tour at Hesper Factory, photo by Mihai Petre

Trust turned out to be one of the main challenges for collaboration in the case of Halele Carol, so building trust became a focus of the adaptive re-use process. This was done through international cooperation and diplomacy, by involving the Dutch ambassador and accessing funds. Later on, also other funds were accessed via the Norwegian EEA grants and European cooperation funds. Moreover, the team of initiators involved at the beginning of the process had a hands-on approach, a

'showing by doing' way of dealing with the project and the stakeholders involved, resulting in transparency and trustworthiness.

"The most important thing was to build the little trust that we built with them [factory owner and his team]. That was essential. They were very reluctant to our age, there is a 20 years difference. They grew up in a totally different culture. So, we wanted to create this bridge of communication and trust. This was the most important thing. This is my prospect, to create trust." Constantin Goagea

Later on, several small but vital fixes were done with the help of the engineers working at the factory, which changed the course of the project for the better.

"There was a sort of breakthrough moment, [...] what we did, we made an excel list. Just really pointing out, 'this roof here, the thing there'. They [factory employees] are all engineers! When they get an excel list, then they understand what to do. [...] They started repairing some urgent leakages, and at some point, they were trying to level the floor. [...] Because they were in [economic] crisis, and they had a little bit of a quiet period, they put people from the factory to do all these works." Meta van Drunen

In 2014, the factory opened to the public under the name of Halele Carol. The launch event attracted 2000 people. Several events were organised until 2015 which established the location as a hotspot in the cultural scene in Bucharest.

In 2015, a fire took place in another factory in the area which was used as a nightclub, which had a huge impact on Bucharest and Romania. Many bars and clubs were closed after this incident, and many event organisers started being more careful about safety regulations. The owner of the factory at Halele Carol decided to stop all activities on site following this incident.

In this context, in 2016, Expirat, one of the oldest clubs in Bucharest, decided to look for a safer location and relocated to Halele Carol. Even though the initiators had bigger plans for the transformation of Halele Carol initially, it was still a victory that they managed to convince the owner to keep the factory open for culture as opposed to some more commercial options.



Picture 5. Romanian Design Week at Halele Carol, Photo by Roald Aron

5 Actors

The following categories of actors related to the Halele Carol project have been identified:

Initiators

- *Zeppelin association* was founded in 2008 by three architects (Constantin Goagea, Cosmina Goagea, Ștefan Ghenciulescu). It is a non-profit working as cultural operator in Romania and Europe. It activates in various projects of placemaking and urban development. Main activities are research, cultural management and architecture production. Moreover, Zeppelin edits a monthly architecture magazine (www.e-zeppelin.ro) and organizes various events, workshops, competitions and debates.
- *Eurodite* was founded in 2008 by Joep de Roo and Meta van Drunen. With Joep's background in European funding and Meta's background as architect they initiated Eurodite in the belief that creativity and cooperation are basic ingredients for development of European areas and regions. Main activities are European cooperation projects and area development. (www.eurodite.eu)

The Hesper Factory

- Owner of the factory (Mircea Pricop), technical director (Cornel Lazar), financial director (Dan Ilisei), staff.

Experts

- *Irina Iamandescu* – expert industrial heritage (RO) – currently deputy director of the National Institute of Heritage in Romania
- *Liesbeth Jansen* – expert industrial heritage transformation (NL) – known for the transformation of the Westergasfabriek in Amsterdam
- *Doru Frolu* – initiator in the transformation of another factory in the neighbourhood, Vama Antrepozite.
- *Various artists from Norway and Romania*

Users

- Various *event organizers* such as Rokolektiv, Romanian Design Week, artists and cultural entrepreneurs.
- *Expirat* – one of the oldest and most famous clubs in Bucharest. Following the fire in Colectiv club in 2015, the owner of Expirat decided to find a safer location for the club. It moved to Halele Carol in 2016.

Public sector

- *Chief architect Bucharest* – involved in various events in 2013-2015
- *Municipality of Bucharest* – currently wants to become more involved
- *ARCUB* – cultural department of the municipality
- *Dutch Embassy in Romania*

Financiers

- *Ministry of Culture in Romania*
- *Ministry of Culture in Norway*

6 Activities



Picture 6. Post Industrial Design – exhibition at Halele Carol, photo by Vlad Bâscă

Halele Carol offered a new platform for a wide community of artists and event organisers working with innovative concepts and formats in the city. Very quickly after the opening, Halele Carol became an important venue for event organisers and many were inquiring about renting the space or had several ideas for developing concepts on the location.

Most of the events organised by Zeppelin were concerts, electronic music festivals, design and architecture exhibitions or debates, film nights but also workshops for children on architecture and heritage.

Organic transformation / step by step adaptive reuse.

Overall, the concept of organic transformation means that small foreseeable steps are taken in the transformation process (as opposite to a blueprint plan). It does not mean that there is no control or no plan. What it means is that the process and activities needed to reach the end objective are not defined in detail. The area is tested 'live' and the process is open to change. Implementation is incremental and through this type of transformation, risks are smaller and there is more flexibility in steering the process. Community involvement is often high because the plans are open and flexible, while ideas of the community can be taken on board during implementation.

The owners showed no interest in renting out the spaces and wanted to have a certain degree of control over the buildings, which made temporary events a good way of working for the first years.

"The idea was that we would make a collaboration with the owner to start investing in this place through events... so that we would have a step by step funding model. And that this would lead to value creation over the long run. But it proved to be that this is very difficult to explain. That this kind of processes take a long time and that the cost comes before the benefit. And if you realize this or you have a long term view, what you invest now especially in this kind of big places, you will not get a return on investment within 1 or 2 years. It takes 10-15 years at least and then

your return on investment can be quite big. You have to have this timeframe to invest your money and efforts. And I think that this was very complex to explain to the Romanian owners. And also regarding the fact that they still have their own factory activities here, so that was the focus of their attention.” Joep de Roo

The initiators managed to cover some of the operating costs from various funding sources, organising events or renting out the space for events. The event activity also brought some profit to Hesper S.A. However, the two parties did not manage to make a long term agreement on how to invest in the space and how to create a management model that is fair for all actors.

Value creation and return on investment in organic transformation

If you do an organic transformation, a lot of time (instead of a large sum of money in one go) is invested in testing and ‘branding’ the space. Organic transformation activities will eventually lead to a suitable programme for the area and subsequent money flows, leading eventually to enough capital to renovate the buildings. (see text box ‘Step by step renovation’).

The ‘programming’, ‘branding’, and putting the location ‘on the mental map’ lead to value increase. The ones doing this (place-makers/community) should be compensated for the value they create. Ideally, they are ‘shareholders’.

This is a complex matter that requires a good discussion between owners, place-makers, communities. and investors on the concepts of ‘ownership’, ‘time’, ‘money’, and ‘risks’.

7 Financial resources

As mentioned above, one of the important revenue sources was organising events or renting out spaces to event organisers. Besides this, the initiators have set up two European collaboration projects to kick-start and give an impulse to the project.

The first subsidized initiative was the Creative Factories, which received a grant of 18.000 euro from the Creative Industries Fund NL in 2013. The grant was used to bring some experts in adaptive re-use of industrial heritage from the Netherlands and have a workshop together with the owner in order to analyse various business models for the long-term development of the factory. The initiators also organised a public debate on the transformation of industrial heritage and created three tandem articles that looked at 3 Dutch cases of adaptive re-use of industrial heritage and connected them to Romanian realities.

The initiators regard this activity as the key point that enabled the process of the re-use project. Tapping into the rich Dutch experience on transformation of industrial heritage kick-started the project and provided a great base for a cooperation with the owner of the factory.

EEA Grants / Norwegian funds

The EEA grants pose nice opportunities for funding heritage related projects, particularly in south-eastern European countries. Besides the appealing EEA regulations, additional rules of the local programme authorities apply. In the case of Romania, the fund is managed by the Ministry of Culture. The ministry applied very tough reporting procedures focussing on processes and paperwork, and not so much on content. The fact that the lead applicant was a private organisation made the reporting process even more difficult.

Secondly, in 2015, the initiators applied for EEA (also known as Norwegian) grants to organise cultural events and cultural education in the less developed south side of Bucharest, while improving the bad shape of iconic historic buildings and enhancing intercultural dialogue between Romania and Norway. Within this project, financed with 200.000 euro and led by Zeppelin, several artists and architects from Norway and Romania developed some installations and interventions at the Halele Carol site. The project contributed to important steps in the transformation process: attracting new audiences and activating and improving the public space on site with the art installations. Looking back, the initiators assessed the administration and reporting procedures as being very bureaucratic.

"We found out that we spent more than 50% of our time in the administrative part. And what we did as an art project or for community involvement became unimportant compared to how much effort went into keeping up the administration."
Constantin Goagea



Picture 7. Terrace of Expirat Club located in Halele Carol. Photo via Expirat

At this point, in 2019, the main economic activities taking place at the site are the production of hydraulic pumps in Hesper, and the Expirat club activity in *Sala compresoarelor*.

8 Non-financial resources

On the other hand, many non-monetary resources were used for the project, and they were equally important for ensuring the process could happen. These resources were: international expertise in adaptive re-use projects, expertise in writing funding/subsidy applications, having architects involved in the project, the Zeppelin magazine with its community and online presence, design and communication experience of the team members, experience with event organising, the access to property (and its lack of heritage status), a rooted network in Bucharest through the Zeppelin members, and perhaps most importantly, goodwill.

"[The Zeppelin platform was] indispensable. We couldn't have done anything without it. It would have been impossible. Because if you want to have a temporary phase, then you need to be able to reach a crowd. Especially we, as foreigners, were not able to do that, so you need to actually work with locals. When we were writing the application for the Norwegian funds, Cosmina [Zeppelin] said 'you have to build a community'. And that was quite an original (not yet in fashion) thing to say back then, but she was definitely very right. You have to really build a community from the start." Joep de Roo

Another important breakthrough moment was when the initiators made an excel list with small but important fixes which could enable the opening of the factory to the public. The spaces were not usable at the moment of arrival as the floor had several holes and there were some leakage issues. After creating the excel, the owner of the factory asked some workers in the factory to work on fixing the issues identified by the architects. This was a very important non-monetary resource as they managed to make a lot of progress in a short amount of time and with relatively low financial investments. This was only made possible because of the trust that was built.

„A very important moment which meant a lot for the project was when we made an excel list with what could be done in a short amount of time. And the owner, who is an engineer, [...] when he looked at the list and understood that he could change some things and make the space usable for events, by using only own resources and very small financial investments, he rolled up his sleeves, called everyone in the factory, explained what everyone needed to do and said: ‚hereby we begin!’ “ Constantin Goagea.

9 Branding and positioning

Even though the initiative to transform Halele Carol through temporary programming only lasted for about two years, the initiators really managed to create a strong identity and brand of the venue. The name Halele Carol was set when developing the first application for funds.

"And in that moment the name Halele Carol was born, and somehow everyone immediately accepted it as if it had always been the name of the place. But this is not really the historical truth. The place was called Wolff Factory, then the Red Star, now Hesper. Actually, Halele Carol is just this place at the back which is made of red bricks, bordering the park, it's only this part. [Very soon after the opening], you

could ask a taxi driver to take you to Halele Carol and they would know immediately.” Constantin Goagea

Having Zeppelin Association as the main institution associated with the site was also very beneficial for the branding and positioning. Zeppelin has been editing an architecture magazine with the same name since 2011 and it was a well-known cultural organisation in the Bucharest scene at the moment of the project launch. Associated with high quality design and content, the association already had an important following which was slowly also becoming a community around the Halele Carol location.



Picture 8. Various posters of events at Halele Carol, design by Zeppelin

10 Heritage

The area in which Hesper S.A. is located has a rich industrial history, having been one of the first innovation areas in Bucharest. The factory represents the industrial pioneering spirit of the 19th century. Therefore, the industrial innovation identity is a central theme in the adaptive re-use process as well.

"Formerly a vineyard hill, this area has turned more than 100 years ago into the most avant-garde urban place, reflecting the ambitions for technological advancement and social change of the country. The Carol park built as an international exhibition, the technical museum, the first train station in Bucharest, the astronomical observatory and many other points in the area made this site once a melting pot of innovation, leisure and urban dynamics." Zeppelin Association

During WW2, military equipment was produced here, whereas in communist times, the industrial heritage was translated into workers' pride, the area becoming a worker neighbourhood. The producer pride is still seen today, when some of the former workers are still living in the area, or even working at Hesper.

"What we are aiming to do is to open a place of significance for the southwestern area of the city (perhaps not the densest in leisure activities), build a platform to bring diverse cultural programmes and cultural content to both nearby residents and to the active groups in the city. We want to give the place a community, and to give communities a place." Zeppelin Association

Halele Carol is located in and around some of the buildings of the Hesper factory terrain. Hesper is proud to be one of the oldest, still-working factories of Bucharest, a testament to the city's industrial transformation. The factory has been continuously producing since the 19th century, making it a living piece of history and an important part of Bucharest's heritage.

"Industrial activity has continued on this location for over 130 years. Currently, Hesper is the most important producer of hydraulic pumps and gear motors in Romania. It is one of the very few factories that are still active in Romania and especially in Bucharest." Mirela Dobre, Hesper SA

The specific objectives of the project were to stop the degradation of historical buildings and preserve their value; to find new functions for the empty buildings (without hindering the production activities in the used buildings); to open a few access points to the park and the street and facilitate public access, all while keeping a strong connection to the values of the place – "manufacturing and creation" and the local pride connected to manufacturing.

Although Halele Carol is not a listed monument, it is located in an area protected for its heritage value (protected area 6) and borders the Carol park area which also benefits from similar protection (area 82). The owner of Halele Carol does not intend to list the building as heritage, as current Romanian heritage law implies many administrative and bureaucratic burdens for listing a monument. Nevertheless, Halele Carol are still seen by the owner, its users and the wider public as part of Bucharest's industrial heritage. The lack of heritage protection for the buildings means they are more vulnerable in the face of a growing real estate market, as well as have less resources available for their maintenance. On the other side, Halele Carol's lack of heritage status also made its adaptive re-use model more feasible, as less regulations apply.

Protected area 63, in which Halele Carol is included, is considered to have the maximum level of protection, meaning that the architectural ensemble of the neighbourhood is protected, and interventions that protect or accentuate the architectural, historical or urban values of the area are allowed. Function changes of buildings are allowed if the original functions do not meet current requirements. Luxury and speciality services (such as art galleries, antique shops or consultancy offices), as well as small bars and restaurants, are also allowed as long as they do not disturb the architectural ensemble, the natural vegetation, or as long as they don't imply the creation of more parking areas. It is forbidden to carry out interventions that would damage the buildings or the area, that would lead to increasing pollution or traffic disturbances, as well as interventions that would disturb the nearby buildings or the water sewage system.

Protected area 82, representing the Carol Park, is set as the park representing a location of reference for Bucharest's image and structure. It also benefits from the maximum protection level, as area 63 does. The current function (park) cannot be changed. The only interventions allowed are those for conserving the current natural elements, constructions or spaces.

Nevertheless, interventions onto buildings that are *not* historical monuments, but are places within the protected area surrounding the monuments, often also need the approval of the ministry or of the empowered public services, if applicable.

11 Influences

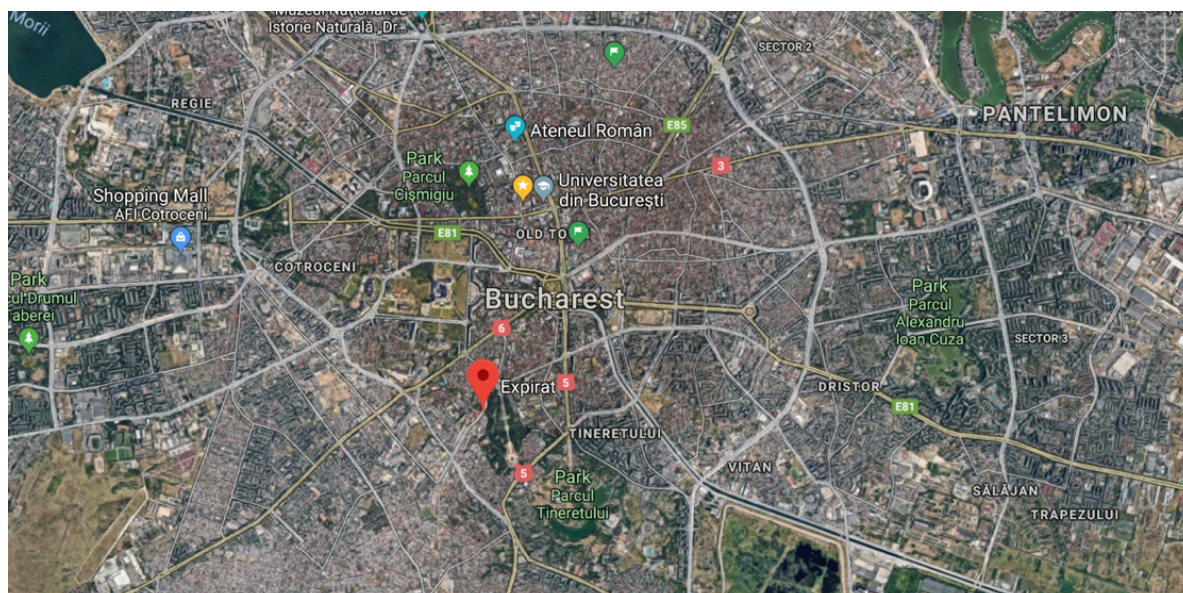
Several themes and projects influenced the process of transformation around Halele Carol. Many important lessons came from the Netherlands and its *experts*: recycling space, applying reversible solutions, starting small and steady instead of creating grand ambitions. *Local projects* like Creative Factories Bucharest, done in collaboration with *international experts*, were also a trigger for Halele Carol. The Carol Factory project was another event done by Zeppelin using Norwegian funds, that activated the area through arts. The *research on industrial heritage as a resource*, done by the [Romanian Architect Association](#) and Zeppelin in 2013, was an important stepping stone in the adaptive re-use direction of Halele Carol.

Several Dutch projects stood at the base for the Halele Carol transformation. The following projects of adaptive re-use of industrial heritage were seen as inspiration:

- [Westergasfabriek](#): example for adaptive re-use of industrial heritage, Westergasfabriek started with its buildings being used for temporary projects, in order to ensure organic growth. Westergasfabriek hosts leisure & cultural events, horeca facilities in a symbiotic relation between innovation and heritage, concrete and nature, or open and intimate spaces. Liesbeth Jansen from Linkeroever, one of the Dutch experts involved in the Halele Carol project, brought Westergasfabriek to the table to inspire the step-by-step area activation process through temporary usage.
- [NDSM](#): An area in the North of Amsterdam formerly used for maritime docks, NDSM has been transformed from a relic of a declining industry into a cultural hotspot for alternative activities. Urban activists and creatives focused on giving new functions to the already existing industrial buildings, which now activate as even spaces, creative industries offices, restaurants, or even a luxury hotel located in a crane. There was no overall project for the transformation. Instead, the transformation happened through small, affordable interventions that organically brought a creative spirit into the area, which is something that Halele Carol implemented as well.
- [Strijp S](#): A symbol of the city's industrial character, Strijp S is a good practice of industrial heritage re-use in Eindhoven, the home of Philips. A former factory, Strijp S transformed into a creative hub of living spaces, businesses, leisure facilities and education institutions through the common efforts of the community and involved policymakers. Similar to other cases in the Netherlands, Strijp S started through temporary usage of the buildings in order to ensure sustainability and an organic growth. The first step was opening one building for Eindhoven's creative community, a measure that Halele Carol also implemented.

Other heritage re-use projects happened in the nearby area of Halele Carol. One of them is the regeneration of the *Vama Antrepozite* – currently known as [The Ark](#) – which took place between 2006 and 2008, where a co-working place and restaurant are now located, after a project started by architect Doru Frolu. The *Bragadiru palace* next door has also undergone transformation, and is now active as event space and hosts one of Bucharest's most renowned restaurants, [Mahala](#), that takes classic Romanian dishes and brings them to high cuisine. Lastly, [Nod Makerspace](#) was set up in 2015 in a former Cotton Factory, also in the vicinity of Halele Carol. The space is still one of the most important cultural hotspots in the South of Bucharest.

12 Context



Picture 9. Map of Bucharest. The red indicator represents Halele Carol

12.1 Socio-geographic description

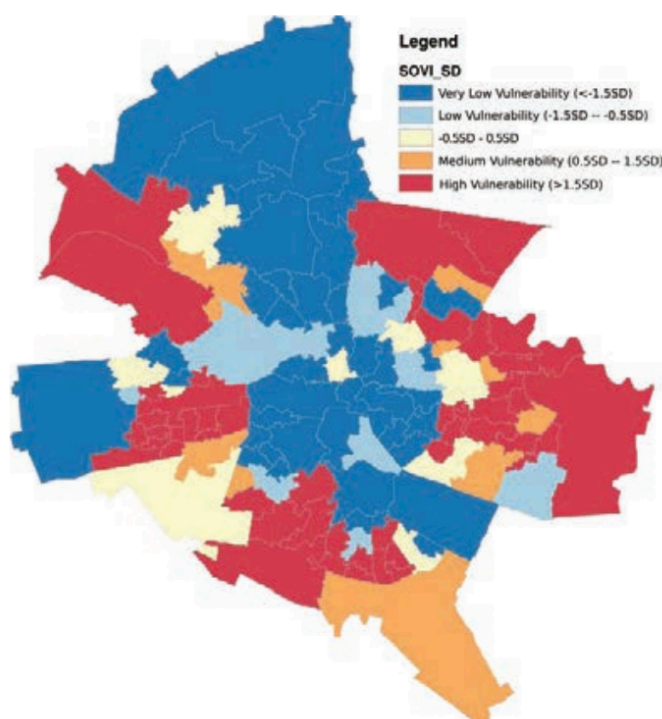
The south of Bucharest is one of the poorer sides of the city, with less infrastructure, more poverty and ethnical segregation than in the other areas. Following the communist urbanism plan in 1980 which reshaped the city, the separation between South and North became more prominent. After 1990, most of the industry which took place in this region stopped, and with them the biggest economic motor of the area.

Nowadays, the North of Bucharest represents the business quarter, with areas like Pipera booming with newly built tower office buildings. The South is generally regarded as a more residential area of Bucharest, including many former workers' neighbourhoods, such as Filaret-Rahova. Many abandoned buildings can be found here as well. The South of Bucharest has some of the largest parks as well, including Carol Park, Tineretului Park, and the newly acknowledged and protected National Park of Vacaresti.

Halele Carol is located in sector 4 of Bucharest, a diverse district with an uneven demographic composition across neighbourhoods. According to the 2011, survey 287,800 people lived in the district. Halele Carol borders sector 5 of Bucharest and is actually closer to the Sector 5 municipality. This can be seen as an example of how the sectors of Bucharest divide the city in slices rather than strategic areas, and sometimes prevent zonal collaboration from happening, as sector management is very politicised and neighbourhoods might fall within two different sectors (e.g. the centre of Bucharest falls partially within all sectors).

Filaret-Rahova is one of the poorest regions in Bucharest with a high social vulnerability, being home to what some regard as one of Bucharest's ghetto

(Amurgului) while Unirii is one of the regions with higher incomes and lower social vulnerability (Armas & Gavris, 2016).



Picture 10. Map of social vulnerability in Bucharest at 2011 census – red signifying highest vulnerability, light blue lowest (Armas & Gavris, 2016)

The Filaret Rahova neighbourhood is quite close to the main centre of the city and it is easily accessible from most neighbourhoods. The site is well reachable by car, bus and trams. Three night-bus lines are also passing by the park. The closest metro station is about 2 km away.

12.2 Economic description

Many SMEs and service providers are located in Sector 4. The service industry is well-developed, especially the telecommunications, financial services, research and education, transport, tourism and culture, and trade. The industrial heritage of the Carol park area is still visible nowadays, with the Hesper factory still producing hydraulic pumps. Other businesses in the Carol park neighbourhood and Protected Area 63 are restaurants, bars, hotels, co-working spaces, cultural spaces and supermarkets (Primaria Sectorului 4, 2014).

Romania has one of the largest percentages of home owners in the EU, with a country average of 96% of adults (Sisea, 2014). Compared to other countries, there are few housing corporations active in Bucharest. After Sector 1, Sector 4 and 5 are the most expensive ones from Bucharest when it comes to real estate. Although less developed, the areas become more interesting for residential and industrial investments. According to imobiliare.ro, the average price per square meter in the

Carol Park area is around EUR 1550 (the Bucharest average in March 2019 was EUR 1327/sqm) (Imobiliare.ro, 2019).

Most lands in Sector 4 are private property according to the municipal registers. Some public utility services (water, sewage, gas) are also under private ownership. The Carol park area has mixed ownership structures in place: some industrial buildings are private property, such as the Hesper factory or the Match Factory (Fabrica de Chibrituri). Other buildings situated around the Carol Park are owned by public institutions, such as the Astronomic Observatory, the Technical Museum and the Filaret Weather. The Carol park itself is managed by the Municipality of Bucharest (AIR & Zeppelin, 2011).

13 Policy

The following laws applies to the activities in the area: Law 422/2001 on historic monuments, Law 6/2008 on technical and industrial heritage, Law 350/2001 on landscaping and urban planning. The Rahova-Filaret area is a protected area nr. 63, and the park represents protected area nr. 82. Both areas and their implications for interventions are described in the Heritage chapter. The General Urban Plan of Bucharest (PUG Bucharest from 2000) and the current Area Urban Plan Carol Park (PUZ Parcul Carol from 2006) apply to the activities in the area surrounding Halele Carol.

The General Urban Plan of Bucharest (PUG), mentions that the Carol Park area is reserved for activities of goods and services production. The Protected Area nr. 63 documentation also implies regulation for the area, albeit mostly for the residential areas and not the industrial buildings. The Area Urban Plan Carol Park (PUZ Parcul Carol) includes Hesper factory in the green area along with other buildings located in the park, meaning they can be converted to spaces for cultural and leisure activities. It was foreseen that the existent constructions of the Hesper factory would be transformed in leisure functions (sport, museums, exhibitions, shows and performances) and integrated into the park. The inclusion of Halele Carol in both the protected area nr. 63 and the Area Urban Plan 'Carol Park' (PUZ Parcul Carol) frame the site for potential repurposing into leisure facilities (sport, events, exhibitions), creating opportunities for the adaptive re-use of the factory's buildings, and making Halele Carol possible.

The Vice Mayor announced that Carol park will be regenerated to become a cultural pole of Bucharest in the next 10 years, after a project for the park's revitalisation was proposed and voted in July 2018. A PUZ (Area Urban Plan) for the new project is [currently being developed](#). Elements of the park such as the Zodiac Fountain or other industrial buildings will be reconditioned and entered into the cultural circuit of the city. The Technical Museum is planned to be taken back under public management and for extension into a Museum of Science and Technology that would include other buildings in the area such as the Electric Factory Filaret. The Bosianu house, currently belonging to the National Institute for Meteorology, would also be renovated and become publicly accessible.



Picture 11. Urban plan of Carol Park, with Hesper located on the left side in blue

14 Impact

Although not the first case of adaptive re-use of industrial heritage in Romania, Halele Carol is regarded as one of the best practices in the field of rehabilitation of buildings through repurposing them with cultural functions. Halele Carol is also one of the best examples of starting a re-use project without investment and through temporary functions.

Nevertheless, the project did not have a general impact on the local community surrounding Halele Carol, as the community has not been involved from the early stages of the project, except from the workers at Hesper factory who attended the events. This made it difficult to involve it later on, and to make the Halele Carol project also representative for the local users. The Hesper factory represents a constant element in the local history and memory. Therefore, one important learning point is to involve the local community early in the project so that local people become part of the new developments.

The project has been well-received in the creative world, with appreciative comments on the industrial revival of the area, and the re-use of the existing buildings instead on constructing new ones. Most public opinions see Halele Carol as an important point on Bucharest's cultural map. Expirat Club, located here, is regarded mostly positively, as one of the clubs who made safety regulations and interventions a priority after the Colectiv fire in 2015.

The re-use of the space increased a certain attachment to the area from the creative community of Bucharest. The idea of an alternative space, needed for the creative industries in Bucharest, was attractive to the cultural community in the city that constantly looks for new spaces to enrich their activity. Halele Carol also provides a special identity for the young creatives of Bucharest. Although it did not manage to involve the community around it, Halele Carol still has a historical value

for the people around, some of which still work at the Hesper factory, and are holding the place dear.

"A direct impact of our project is that the name and the place are still very visible. The name and its attractivity for the cultural community in Bucharest, which actually translates to a high impact for Bucharest. There are people who understood that many of the centre equipment for leisure and entertainment could come here and that the park area could become very important for Bucharest. And that would mean a lot for the people living in the South of the city, which is actually the poorest part when it comes to leisure facilities" Constantin Goagea



Picture 12. Post Industrial Design – exhibition at Halele Carol, photo by Vlad Bâscă

In general, the narrative presents Halele Carol as a 'cultural hotspot' or a 'cultural hub' of Bucharest, emerged from the adaptive re-use of the industrial heritage. Halele Carol is placed in the same best practice category as other industrial re-use examples across the country, such as The Ark and Nod Makerspace in Bucharest, or Fabrica de Pensule in Cluj. The 'Nordic vibe' of the new design and architectural elements (such as the wooden constructions) are appreciatively mentioned at times.

The Municipality of Bucharest developed a plan to further develop the Carol park into a cultural centre of Bucharest, as described in the previous chapters. This is based on the value and potential of the area, which the Halele Carol project also highlighted and tapped into. Halele Carol can be considered the project that put Carol park back on the cultural map of Bucharest.

Regarding the impact on the economic life of the area, there have not been any jobs created through the project yet. The project did not directly enable the launch of new initiatives and/or start-ups. Nevertheless, it did open a new leisure and cultural area. As a result, more attention was drawn to the neighbourhood and several new leisure services / facilities opened here. As described previously, the South of Bucharest has been customarily seen as less developed than the North. Therefore, Halele Carol expanded the cultural centre of the city towards the South,

putting the area on the leisure map. As a result, the neighbourhood also saw more people coming here. More leisure activities developed in the area: Expirat Club is a popular nightclub; parties and events have been organised in the buildings of the Astronomic Institute; other bars and restaurants (ex: Ponton, now closed) started to appear and/or see more guests.



Picture 13. Post Industrial Design – exhibition at Halele Carol, photo by Vlad Bâscă

15. Interviewees

Constantin Goagea – Co-founder Zeppelin

Joep de Roo – Director Eurodite

Meta van Drunen – Partner Eurodite

Irina Iamandescu – Deputy Director National Institute for Heritage

Mirela Dobre - Commercial Manager HESPER SA

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