

EIGHT PROJECTS OF URBAN RIVER REVITALISATION NOW UNDER WAY

In short

We welcome you to the first newsletter of the REURIS project: *Revitalisation of Urban River Spaces*. Eight partners from six cities in three countries have successfully applied for funding under the EU Central Europe Programme. This newsletter will inform you of the REURIS idea and will give you an impression of the goals each partner will pursue.

Please also visit the project at: www.reuris.gig.eu



Katowice: Ślepiotka river



Bydgoszcz:
Bydgoszcz Old Canal



Brno: Old Ponávka



Plzen: Junction of
Úslava and Mže

Revitalisation of Urban River Spaces

For decades urban rivers in Central Europe were seen as a threat rather than benefit. Thus, despite the fact that such areas are particularly important and often the only functioning or potential reservoirs of biodiversity and open space in the city, degraded or abandoned riparian areas are common in Central European cities. Active protection and restoration of such areas is one of the basic kinds of activities for shaping spatial order and sustainable development of cities. The issue of urban river space management is the more complicated because revitalisation of such places needs solutions for complex environmental and socio-economic problems. Regardless of the specificity of a given city and river, the strategic approach to solving these tasks is to create a common set of methods and procedures for coordinated work of multidisciplinary teams as well as effective social involvement. The aim of REURIS is to create such tools, test them in practice (by means of conducting pilot investment projects), and also assess their effects. It is believed that the legacy of REURIS will contribute to the EU principle of sustainable development by showing ways to tackle social, economic, political and ecological issues, thus increasing the quality of human life.

Researchers and practitioners from Plzeň and Brno (Czech Republic), from Stuttgart and Leipzig (Germany) and from Bydgoszcz and Katowice (Poland) now work on these issues of sustainable urban river areas management. The following paragraphs will give a brief overview of all partner projects funded through REURIS under the Central Europe Programme.

Katowice/ Ślepiotka River

The project is oriented towards the creation of a practice-based activity model for revitalisation, development of public involvement procedures, and increase of competences on financing and management of revitalised spaces. The aim of the pilot action is the partial renaturalisation of the Ślepiotka river channel, restoration of an ecological corridor, increase of water retention, improvement of stormwater management, restoration of landscape resources, and improvement of public access to the valley of the Ślepiotka stream.

Bydgoszcz/ Bydgoszcz Old Canal

The essence of the project is to create a package of governing principles for the urban river revitalisation process and to exemplify them by practical implementation. The focus lies on the Bydgoszcz Old Canal in the city centre and the pro-ecological management of the adjacent area. The project will include planning action, social consultation with the inhabitants, designing phase, implementation of the investment as well as its assessment.

Brno/ Old Ponávka

The project aims to transform the deprived Old Ponávka river into a blue-green axis, i.e. a connected system of public green spaces related to the water, which will be integrated in the urban structure of Brno. The project will prepare complex revitalisation measures of this water stream and its surroundings as well as increase public awareness for the problematic of urban river spaces.

Plzeň/ Mže, Radbuza, Úhlava and Úslava

The project “Revitalisation of Pilsen River Valleys” tackles the potential of rivers in the city. Its conception is based on cooperation of all resorts responsible and it will capitalise on all features the local rivers offer. These are ecological aspects like the uniqueness of the fluvial landscape, flood management, nature and environment protection or economical aspects like regional development, ecotourism and recreation.

Stuttgart/ Feuerbach

In Stuttgart, the local project is concentrated on the revitalisation of the river Feuerbach near Zazenhausen which is a very important contribution to complete the system of green axes in the urban town planning and green-corridor system. It will strengthen ecological functions like soil, water, local climate, biodiversity, and flood protection as well as socioeconomic functions for example landscape scenery and new green recreational areas. The superior aim is to develop transnational valid methods for project implementation through the evaluation of best practices with regard to ecological, economical and social benefits.

Aufbauwerk Leipzig/ Green Belt around Leipzig

By supporting several small measures focused on the Neuseenland (a recently flooded former strip mining site in the south of Leipzig) on the restoration of covered canals in the city centre, and on parts of the European water network the Green Belt pursues two main aims. First, the project concentrates on the protection of endangered river areas against flooding. Secondly it strives for the improvement of the quality of life by enhancing active citizen participation and public access to lakes, canals and rivers.

University of Leipzig, Institute of Sociology/ Karl-Heine-Canal and Lindenau Harbour

“Wasser im Westen” will work on strategies of urban river management in the case of two Leipzig waterbodies that will be connected by a short canal in the near future. The project will promote sustainable ecological, economic, and social development of the waters and their adjacencies. It will include specific custom-made improvement measures, civic participation and involvement of other actors in the area. Best practices will be transformed into general policy recommendations.

University of Leipzig, Institute of Infrastructure and Resources Management

To some extent framing all previously described projects the IIRM will develop general financing tools for future revitalisation of urban river spaces namely by opening and restoring covered canals. Making use of financing options from other domains, especially in the brownfield redevelopment the tools are supposed to support not only Leipzig but also other European cities in their revitalisation effort by formulating proposals for the practical adaptation of selected financing options.



Stuttgart: Feuerbach



Aufbauwerk Leipzig:
Elstermühlgraben



Leipzig: Karl-Heine-Canal

**For further
information
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REURIS is funded by

