

Urban Rivers – Vital Spaces



In short

REURIS project partners have been working for 18 months now and are able to present some outcomes of their efforts. This newsletter informs you of past events and future plans.



Katowice local support group meeting

From October 2009 to April 2010 the project documentation (technical design) in Katowice has been completed by using analytical procedures and by involving the public. Also study works dedicated to planning a green corridor about 2,5 km long along Ślepiotka have been done.



Meeting with local high school students



Meeting with professionals

Halftime

Now that half of its duration is over, we can update you on the project's progress. As you can see from the following paragraphs all partners are busy increasing the vitality of their urban river spaces. At the last meeting in Stuttgart there was an intensive exchange of work experiences completed by an excursion to the project site in Stuttgart Feuerbach (see page XX). The project consultants for economic, ecological and social issues also met in Stuttgart and made a great contribution to the project development by specifying their evaluation criteria.

Most partners held seminars to involve local stakeholders discuss their particular revitalisation approaches or inform the public. As you can see from the reports below REURIS gets a very positive feedback from all target groups. Thus we have no doubt that the second half of the project duration will provide us with further positive experiences.

Information Events in Katowice

After the project documentation was completed and handed over to City Hall in December 2009 the procedure of the public procurement for the implementation of the pilot investment has been carrying out in the first three months of 2010. At the same time the next series of meetings with the local support group, inhabitants and students from the surrounding schools took place. The topics of the meetings were the idea of the REURIS project, implementation of the idea in Ślepiotka valley/corridor, environmental, spatial and social aspects of revitalisation, as well as the pilot investment. Additionally most local schools received posters about the REURIS project. Parallel a meeting with representatives of some departments of Katowice City Hall and municipal institutions involved in the matter was held in order to prepare future public consultations about the elaboration of a target vision of Ślepiotka valley and the planning process of the revitalisation projects. REURIS was also presented at the meeting of the Silesian Union of Municipalities and Districts.

In April 2010 implementation of the pilot investment will begin.

Revitalisation study of Ślepiotka River

Core results of the study are the base data for ongoing elaboration of a local spatial plan. It means, some results of REURIS activities will be implemented into local law regulations. The revitalisation study of Ślepiotka River has been written in Polish, with executive summary in English.

Park Revitalization along the Old Canal in Bydgoszcz

Due to certain activities related to the pilot action of the REURIS Project, the new investment in the city is to be implemented. It is based on cooperation between responsible units, institutions related to the park area, and also representatives of citizens.

Owing to this idea, not only programme guidelines of the REURIS Project are taken into consideration in the project work, but also expectations of future users of the park area. Meetings as Tech-

Urban Rivers – Vital Spaces

nical Meeting and Support Group enable the information flow between institutions responsible for the area and current resolving of arising problems.

The area of 65 ha included in the spatial planning conception creates a variety of opportunities for the rich programme offer. We can find here e.g. playgrounds placed according to their age (including water playgrounds, which use the stream flowing near the Old Canal), a restaurant, areas for active and passive recreation (skate park and ropes course, health path).

The park area management protects its valuable natural sites and allows to implement new plants in order to secure biodiversity of the area and shelters for animals.

Technical design – pilot action

The area of the pilot site is extremely challenging to manage due to its location in the city centre, which involves a vast net of the underground infrastructure. Those difficulties are also the cause of the characteristic lay of the land, with a deep depression of the land (which is the result of the process of lowering to minimum the water level).

There will be seats for strollers on the slope, and the stream of water will be widened and modified by the special construction of the bottom that animates dynamic water movement. Nearby, biotope with perennial plants will be implemented. There will be a small playground and walking paths in the neighbouring area.

Get the Project Actions Update:

- Settling the results of the tender for the executor of project works (October 2009)
- 1st technical meeting (meeting between the representatives of particular Departments of the City Hall, institutions linked to the park and designers) to establish basic directions of the project activities (November 2009)
- 2nd technical meeting to confirm proposed solutions of given conceptions. Creating the spatial planning conception of managing the park along the Old Canal (December 2009)
- Technical project realization works, meetings of local support group, meeting with local stakeholders (January 2010)
- 3rd technical meeting to confirm proposed solutions of the technical project, finalization of WP 3 works over four chapters to REURIS manual, professionals' group meeting (February 2010)
- further project works – technical design of the pilot site (since March 2010)



First drafts of the design



The spatial planning conception of managing the Old Canal
(Author: IN&OUT Architects
Dorota Nitecka – Frączyk)



The historic lock of the Old Canal

In short

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.



Old Ponávka in Brno



Workshop

At a public meeting held at Pilsen City Hall council chambers in February, the residents of Pilsen had the opportunity to learn more about the completed studies and planned objectives in the Uslava and Mže River floodplains. The studies are discussed with the authorities in the municipal districts affected and presented at municipal district

Complex Revitalisation Study of Old Ponávka in Brno



spaces related with water stream (blue-green axis) and ecological reactivation of river and its waterfronts.

The next steps until June 2010 will be the development, visualization, and presentation of detailed proposals for selected sections.

The complex revitalisation study of Old Ponávka is the main output of the Brno pilot action. The aim of the study is a complex proposal of revitalisation measures on the water stream of Old Ponávka and its integration in the city life. The study was elaborated by a team composed of architects, town planners, revitalisation and water management specialists as well as landscape architects. During the period from September 2009 to February 2010 the *analysis part* of the study and the *general proposal* for the whole stream of Old Ponávka were completed. The main objectives of the proposal are a unified vision for the whole stream, creating connections for pedestrians and cyclists between Svitava and Svatka rivers, allowing public access to river banks, building up of a connected system of public green

Activities carried out:

- 2nd work meeting (November 2009)
- 2nd public meeting (December 2009)
- meeting for professionals (January 2010)
- meetings with the key local stakeholders in the area (2009-2010)
- international student workshop with participants from three universities (October 2009)
- exhibition of student proposals from workshop in Urban Centrum (December 2009 – February 2010)

Pilsen: Specialized Seminar on the Topic of Revitalising Watercourses in Urbanized Areas

Tomáš Just from the Nature and Landscape Protection Agency centre in Prague shared his many years of experience and knowledge from successfully implemented projects in Germany and Austria. Particularly using examples of revitalisation in Bavarian cities, he used graphic depictions to explain that natural watercourse adaptations can also be made in settled areas, but only while prioritizing the preservation of flow capacity and watercourse stability. At the same time, in nearly every case it is possible to increase the environmental value and aesthetic appearance of the watercourse and also consider revitalisation and anti-flooding measures together. Representatives from the Ministry of the Environment contributed to the discussion with information on support for close-to-nature management of water

Urban Rivers – Vital Spaces

courses and flood areas, and opportunities for receiving funding from the Operational Programme “Environment”.

Jiří Karnecki presented encouraging results from the “Streams for Life” project and other investment projects made by the City of Prague Department of Environmental Protection. The successful revitalisation of the dry Čihadla polder, the Botič Stream at Kozinovo náměstí and the Šárecký Stream at Hvězda Park were also listed in the study “REURIS – Examples of Good Practice in Revitalizing Watercourses in Urbanized Environments in the Czech Republic”.

The landscaping concept for revitalizing the Úslava River was presented by RNDr. Miroslav Hájek. He and his team drew up a detailed dendrology study on the inventory of vegetation on the riverbanks and supplementary growth, with a proposal for cultivation measures and follow-up maintenance plans. The landscaping concept also contains two specific projects on municipal land in Lobzy, where parts of a bio-corridor of regional significance are being implemented as part of the territorial environmental stability system.

On Saturday, March 20, the administrator of the Vltava River Basin held its 11th annual open house to commemorate World Water Day. In addition to guided science tours of the modern watercourse management laboratories, visitors once again had the opportunity to become familiar with the details of the Revitalization of Pilsen Riverbanks project and look at all of the documentation that has been drawn up so far, including the most recent completed comprehensive study entitled Revitalization of the Mže Riverbank.

A new folded brochure also presents the Úslava River within the city of Pilsen and proposed detailed urban landscape concepts for individual neighbourhoods.

International REURIS Meeting in Stuttgart

Experts from Poland, Czech Republic and Germany discussed the multidisciplinary aspects of urban river revitalisation projects

From November 3rd to November 5th more than 45 experts and deputies from Joint Technical Secretariat joined the international REURIS meeting in the city hall of Stuttgart. The members of the expert teams running the project REvitalisation of Urban River Spaces are biologists, ecologists, landscape and town planners, city managers, social scientists and economists. They come from Katowice and Bydgoszcz (Poland), Plzen and Brno (Czech Republic) as well as from Leipzig and Stuttgart (Germany). They met to discuss ecological, economic, political and social aspects of revitalisation projects in the context of urban river spaces.

Revitalisation projects in urban river spaces are very complex and there is a need for proper planning, implementation and realisation of the projects. These are the first and most important results from the evaluation of best practice examples carried out and discussed by the experts during one of the workshops. “Today, it is not enough to compile very good plans, you need to develop a strategy to get the agreement of all local stakeholders,

commissions. At the same time, preparation of the project documentation for additional locations on the Úslava and Mže Rivers is underway .



In short

During international REURIS meeting experts discussed the complex aspects of urban river revitalisation projects. Exchange of experiences about the pilot projects to be realised in Katowice, Bydgoszcz, Leipzig and Stuttgart, a field trip through the Neckar valley and to the pilot project site in Stuttgart as well as a public event with speeches of all project partners and a poster exhibition made the congress of revitalisation experts perfect.

Urban Rivers – Vital Spaces



From the top of the “Rotenberg” hill the experts had a great view of the industrialised former floodplains of the today canalized river.

to convince politicians, to get the licence granted and to get the financing for the projects”, Elisabeth Bender, assistant to the REURIS team in Stuttgart, concluded.

Thus, during the last months, the experts developed a long list of international valid principles to be regarded during revitalisation project planning within an urban context. Revitalisation projects should enhance the ecological functionality of the watercourse as an ecosystem, provide flood protection, increase the residential and recreational value and allow a permanently sustainable use of watercourses and their alluvial plains. More than 52 different principles could be identified. They may serve as a guideline and a check list for future planning of revitalisation projects. “River revitalisation projects within urban context are one of the most complex and one of the most difficult tasks landscape planners and town planners have to deal with”, Eva Brejchová, head of the REURIS team in Plzen, phrased the abstract of this module of the REURIS project.

“To handle aspects of planning, ecological aspects and creative aspects of river revitalisation is not enough for successful implementation of future revitalisation projects”, all experts agreed according to the first results of the REURIS project. They plan to analyse the current financing options as well as to elaborate the economic and the non economic benefits of river revitalisation. Additionally, they will check up the commonly used methods for cooperative planning and try to figure out, if there are specific methods especially suitable for revitalisation projects.

Feuerbach Pilot Project being realised

The REURIS pilot project in Stuttgart comprises the demolition of a former sports field in Zazenhausen and the revitalisation of the brownfield and the river Feuerbach. The design for revitalisation and the overall ecological aims of the project are defined. The application of building licence is submitted. A local study with information about the catchment area of river Feuerbach and the ecological conditions as well as the basic parameters of soil, water, animals, plants and vegetation is the base of the design of the pilot project. Two studies handling the whole catchment area of river Feuerbach, 18 additional references and lots of data from administration and locally engaged people could be used as database. Additionally, a field mapping of biotopes and vegetation structure was carried out. Several meetings with the REURIS support group, administration representatives, local farmers and non-governmental engaged groups took place to come to an agreement about the design and the realisation of the pilot project. According to the German Fee Structure for Architects and Engineers and according to the German Construction Contract Procedures the timetable for realisation now could be fixed:

- Detailed design: June 2010
- Technical plan for execution: September 2010
- Granting of construction works: October 2010
- Start of construction: November 2010
- Completion of construction: February 2011

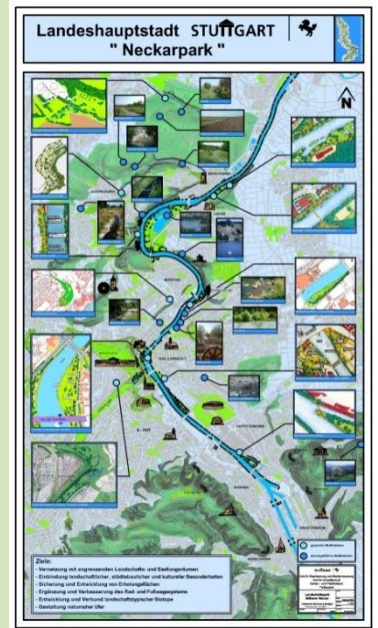


Discussion of the revitalisation plans explained by Wolfgang Maier during the visit of the pilot project river Feuerbach.

Urban Rivers – Vital Spaces

Public planning meeting for professionals

100 visitors joined the workshop “Living Spaces for Man and Nature – Strategies and Methods for Successful Project Implementation” in the city hall of Stuttgart on 5th March. “The meeting was a complete success”, said Johann Senner (Planstatt Senner, Überlingen). The landscape architect was one of nine surveyors who submitted field reports about successful river revitalisation and implementation in urban context. Manfred Meister (Verband Region Stuttgart), Walter Braun (Water and Shipping Authority Stuttgart), Peter Geitz (Geitz und Partner, Stuttgart), Christoph Luz (LUZ Landschaftsarchitektur, Stuttgart), Susanne Metz (City of Mannheim), Till Kohler (City of Villingen-Schwenningen), Rudolf Mazarin (Filderstadt) and Daniela Schaufuß (City of Munich) discussed drawbacks and opportunities for better project implementation and changed their experiences. “Revitalisation projects in urban river spaces are very complex and there is a need for proper planning, implementation and realisation of the projects”, the experts concluded. For the urban river spaces in Stuttgart they strongly recommended to come to a realisation of projects especially along the river Neckar: “We do have a lot of experts, a lot of know how and a lot of ideas for river revitalisation projects along the Neckar.” They strongly recommended to step by step realise the ideas demonstrated and exposed in a framework plan available from the municipal Subdepartment of Green Structure Planning and from the Verband Region Stuttgart.



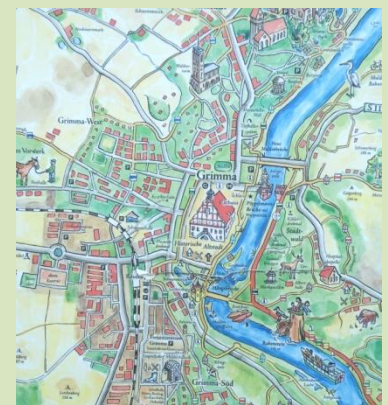
The Blue Plan Stuttgart – a kind of framework planning for future river revitalisation projects in the urban valley of river Neckar

Aufbauwerk Leipzig: The History of Thostgrundbach

The City of Grimma is located in the valley of the river Mulde. The historic city core used to be enclosed by a bayou. With the city’s fortification and the shoreline stabilization the Mulde was straightened and fixed, so that the river’s main branch leveled out on a low and stable level. Because of that the bayou was detached and used as moat fed by the surrounding brooks and sources.

The city moat and the Thostgrundbach (Thostcreek) coming from northeast emptied into many ponds that existed northeast of the city, too. But in the middle of the 19th century the last pond and remains of the moat were filled in. Instead streets, playgrounds as well as the historic slaughterhouse were built and an ongoing, more intensive use followed due to transformation of grassland into farmland, deforestation for the establishment of building ground and construction activities.

Because of increasing flood water levels with high damages to the infrastructure in 1923 a city wall with an overflow channel was edified at the Thostgrundbach. The open moat was piped and led to the Mulde. With the increase in agricultural use in the 1970s flood water became present again, so that the channels leading into the lower Thostgrundbach had to be enlarged.



The historic centre of Grimma



Covered creek in the centre of Grimma

Urban Rivers – Vital Spaces



Thostgrundbach today

In the middle section of Thostgrundbach the creek is covered with pipes DN 500. As the pictures on the left show the meadow has no valuable species. On the left valley-side slope there is only dry grassland, but on the right side *Phalaris arundinacea* and other species of wetlands can be found.

Brief Description of the Project

Basic idea of the project

- Protection of the cold air corridor which is important for the historic town center of Grimma
- opening of the piped water course
- improvement of flood control and protection for the town

Environmental function:

- connection of the protected biotopes and creation of new habitats
- flood retention for the Old Town

Social function

- the project focuses on the improvement of outdoor leisure and recreational facilities without the need for technical infrastructure

Aesthetic function

- creation of an attractive valley
- providing public access to the water
- creation of playgrounds providing interaction with the water
- planting trees and landscaping

Recreational function

- development of a footpath and a cycle track
- creation of space for habitants
- preservation/ revaluation of a green axis towards the urban area

In short

REURIS Leipzig has been busy scientifically as well as practically: The Institute for Infrastructure and Resources Management held an expert workshop on financial options. Furthermore the team developed several initiatives for stakeholder involvement.



Workshop on financing options

Workshop on Financing Options at Leipzig University

Reuris partner University of Leipzig focuses on two main aspects of urban river revitalisation. One is the analysis of methods of financing a revitalisation project. Therefore the Institute for Infrastructure and Resources Management of the University of Leipzig held a workshop about financing options for the revitalisation of urban river spaces. About 20 experts took part in the workshop which aimed at the exchange of experiences that have been made in Germany so far. Amongst others, the focus was on financing options like residents' involvement in funding, public private partnership, cooperation with foundations and on best practice examples. You can find the workshop report (in German) and the presentations at REURIS webpage.

Responsibility for the Urban River Space

The second focus of work lies on the requirements for the sustainability of successful revitalisation. Therefore the Reuris partner University of Leipzig tries to arouse public interest and involvement through specific approaches. One example: In order to encourage social responsibility and respect for the environment we use an experiential education programme. A group

Urban Rivers – Vital Spaces

of socially disadvantaged young people got the chance for a one week training culminating in building a bridge from ropes that stretched over the Karl Heine Canal. In 2010 we will repeat this project two times. In May a youth group of a local educational institution will be trained in developing social competences, and in August the bridge will even be opened for the public during a city festival along Leipzig's watercourses.

As a second approach we developed a project to design a web page which combined several aims: promoting sustainable development, employment as well as equal opportunities and also focusing on our project area and its residents. Under the title www.kanalnachbarschaften.de women in maternity leave got the chance to learn basics in web design, photography and journalism and to apply these skills to the project aims. The initiative was a big success as can be seen on the homepage of www.kanalnachbarschaften.de which is online since December 2009.

Increasing Amenity Values

Darkness makes any waterbody less attractive. After sunset the accessibility and usability decrease because people do not like dark spaces. In order to extend the period of time in which the revitalised river in Leipzig appeals inviting and open to citizens Reuris partner University of Leipzig developed a concept of illuminating the bridges that cross the Karl Heine Canal. Starting with one bridge we test sustainable ways of lighting that are attractive for pedestrians as well as for pleasure boats trips after dusk sets. A second initiative follows a similar philosophy: The amenity values of the riparian strips are highly influenced by the way seatings are arranged and how the places to rest develop a relation to the water. The Leipzig project site shows many opportunities to improve the possibilities to pause and linger which is why Reuris partner University of Leipzig initiated a students' seminar to sketch their ideas for new seatings and spaces to rest. The next step will be to professionalize the approaches and look for ways of realization. Therefore we organized a guided excursion to the canal where local VIPs will be informed and get the chance to support the project.



Building a bridge over the canal



Presentation of webpage



Concept of illumination



Students' seminar on new seatings

Project Partner and Contact Information



Project Manager

Leszek Trząski

Central Mining Institute
Pl. Gwarków 1
40-166 Katowice (Poland)
www.gig.eu
reuris@gig.eu



City of Katowice

Sabina Denysenko

Urząd Miasta Katowice
ul. 3 Maja 7
40-096 Katowice (Poland)
www.um.katowice.pl
sabina.denysenko@um.katowice.pl



Bydgoszcz City

Bogna Rybacka

City Council
Jezuicka 1
85-102 Bydgoszcz (Poland)
bogna.rybacka@um.bydgoszcz.pl



City of Brno

Hana Bernardová
Ivan Hloušek
Vendula Večeřová

Magistrát města Brna
Kounicova 67
601 67 Brno (Czech Republic)
www.ponavka.brno.cz
bernardova.hana@brno.cz
hlousek.ivan@brno.cz
vecerova.vendula@brno.cz



Urban Planning and Development Institute of the City of Pilsen

Pavλίna Červená
Eva Brejchová
Kateřina Juríková

Škroupova 5
305 84 Pilsen (Czech Republic)
http://ukr.plzen.eu
cervenap@plzen.eu
brejchova@plzen.eu
jurikova@plzen.eu



City of Stuttgart – Amt für Stadtplanung und Stadterneuerung

Wolfgang Maier
Elisabeth Bender

Sachgebiet Grünordnungs- und
Landschaftsplanung
Eberhardstraße 10
70173 Stuttgart (Germany)
wolfgang.maier@stuttgart.de
elisabeth.bender@stuttgart.de



Aufbauwerk Region Leipzig GmbH

Sandra Commichau

Otto-Schill-Strasse 1
04109 Leipzig (Germany)
commichau@aufbauwerkleipzig.com

University of Leipzig

Linda Kochmann

IIRM
Grimmaische Str. 12
04109 Leipzig (Germany)
kochmann@wifa.uni-leipzig.de

Karin Lange
Sylke Nissen

Institute of Sociology
Beethovenstr. 15
04107 Leipzig (Germany)
reuris@uni-leipzig.de
www.reuris.uni-leipzig.de