

UrbSpace – enhancing the attractiveness and quality of the urban environment

UrbSpace – background and project objectives

Some 75 % of the population of the Central Europe region lives in urban areas, a figure which is likely to continue to grow. Towns and cities are perceived as engines of regional development, offering a broad range of services and economic and cultural opportunities. However, urban concentrations of population bring a number of problems. The spread of urbanisation removes previously clear boundaries between settlement and surrounding landscape, putting great pressure on the natural landscape setting.

In many urban areas, the historic core is surrounded by physically separated new suburbs, which are nevertheless functionally linked to the urban centre, leading to growth in road traffic resulting in the loss of biodiversity and fragmentation of the natural environment.



The partnership of the project comprises a variety of multi-sectoral organizations (local and regional authorities, universities, NGOs etc.) ensuring a multi-actor approach. The complexity of the polycentricism and urban spaces issues needs to be solved through transnational cooperation and the exchange of experiences, benchmarking and formulating common strategies. The pilot actions in different Central target areas (urban, coastal and cross border) will examine the implementation of the joint strategy for sustainable urban spaces.



Activities - Transport and Spatial Planning Institute

The Transport and Spatial Planning Institute is looking after availability and accessibility for all urban spaces. It is paying attention to transfer the knowledge of design for all to the project partners by:

- organising conferences belonging to the issues "access for all to the city centres" and "access for all to green public spaces"
- benchmarking the current state-of-practice of accessibility for all in the partner cities / partner regions
- benchmarking the planned URBAN SPACE projects under the view of the design for all approach

The Transport and Spatial Planning Institute will arrange a pilot action together with the local partner city of Erfurt. Concerning this the following research steps would be carried out.

- Analysis of the strengths and weaknesses in design for all referring to the inner city of Erfurt divided in different user needs, especially in types of handicap (e.g. wheelchair users, people with impaired mobility, visually impaired, blind, hearing impaired, deaf, mentally challenged)
- Development of an accessibility plan for the inner city including footpaths, public transportation, parking sides and the points of interest along with green public spaces with a special view on tourist needs
- Development of an action plan with well-defined priorities and an operating schedule
- Development of accompanying measures to provide information about the accessibility for different user groups electronically based on the internet and static based as signs in the city centre



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