



INTERREG IVC PROJECT PERIURBAN PARKS

Component 4: Methodology Testing and Regional Action Plans

Final Report Template

Pilot Area	Periurban forest park Košice
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Part 1: Contact Details

1. Pilot Area

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Part 2: Information on Project Activities

The current template is a tool for elaborating the final report of the pilot partner and peer review activities. It therefore compiles the partners' contributions formulated in the work plan and peer review templates according to the fields below.

1. Overview of Pilot Area

Provide a brief description of the chosen pilot area, including key characteristics (abstract of relevant aspects mentioned on Work Plan: size, typology of park, level of development of park, main functions, main strengths and weaknesses):

Territory of periurban Forest Park at the area of 4.573 ha is managed (over the entire range of forest property of the city of Košice - about 19 500 ha) by company Municipal Forest Enterprise, founded by the City of Košice. The pilot area is situated in the northern part of the city of Košice. The pilot area consists of two parts – park Ťahanovce and park Bankov.

Park Ťahanovce represents a high value forestry area. The lack of tourist infrastructure and services for visitors are the most current issues that need to be addressed. Our challenge is to improve short-term recreation facilities for public in this part of the pilot area. This can only be done with close cooperation and communication with the Mayors of the City Districts and local groups (of cyclists, hikers, runners) and citizen participation - their direct involvement in the creation of the park proposals and ideas through an interactive leaflet.

Park Bankov represents a territory with a long recreational history and with quite well established infrastructure. The great challenge would be the zoning of the park and its non-existent monitored visitor attendance. For this part of the park it is necessary to prepare a proposal for its further development with regard on protected areas of European importance located in this territory, focusing on cooperation with Municipal Forest Enterprise and City District, linking their plans in the park as its manager with a broader urban view and citizen's needs and requirements for development of the territory. The great challenge is to reevaluate the zoning of the park.

2. Methodology

According to the Methodology Sections you had selected under field 3.2.a of your Work Plan, please shortly describe the Methodologies implemented in your contribution to component 4:

Management/relation to surrounding area

- *Planning for future development* - One of the most important outputs of Periurban project for the City of Košice will be a study on further development of the pilot areas (Park Bankov, park Ťahanovce), later on beyond the life of the project, a Park Management Plan, therefore partners' experiences with this topics are helpful (Seine-Saint Denis, Metropolitan Association of Upper Silesia – their methodology and cooperation with municipal parts of Katowice during development of Acton plans for municipal parts).
- *Joint involvement of institutional stakeholders and actors* - Management of periurban forest park Košice directly involves the local authorities at the municipal level and manager of periurban forest park – Municipal Forest Enterprise. Other stakeholders in the management of the park involved indirectly, based on feedback from communication with those directly concerned. In the case of the City of Košice the feedback from communication with

stakeholders was done through an interactive leaflet, where citizens could express their idea and proposals for further activities in the pilot area Ľahanovce, and also through a questionnaire on public opinion and view on both pilot areas.

Policy/regulatory aspects

- *The periurban park as a recognised tool in regional law* - from our perspective, it is necessary to introduce this process into our legislation, which in our situation is, to develop a legally binding document for decision-making in the area. In our case it can be elaboration of pilot area studies, which we are preparing within activities in the pilot areas. These two studies will later become the basis for incorporation into the new upcoming The Master plan Košice (included binding regulations of the layout areas). A detailed documentation will also be a more detailed basis for decision making in the area. In the case of the park Ľahanovce, it would mean a new conceptual approach to the creation and subsequent management of the park. In the case of the park Bankov, it would mean a basis for its' future development and a new management of the park. Another step could be, to prepare a generally binding regulation about the importance of these areas for the population living under civilisation pressure and about definition and setting up the rules.
- *Zoning of the park* – for the part Bankov, it is necessary to prepare a proposal for its further development with regard on protected areas of European importance located in this territory, focusing on cooperation with Municipal Forest Enterprise and City District. This proposal will include also reevaluation of the zoning of the park. Results from monitoring, which is still on-going, will be used in the study, where a new zoning of this pilot area will be proposed.

Social and Communication Aspects

- *Promotion of the park* - spreading information, about the opportunities offered by the park requires a whole spectrum of tools, such as: web-sites, printed information materials, incl. periodical newsletters, brochures, leaflets, announcements in local media, public events, fairs, exhibitions, direct communication. Most of them we used in the pilot areas of the City of Košice.

In terms of achieving efficient communication, the city of Košice applies tools such as spreading information through our city web site, preparing an interactive leaflet of a new spatial composition for residents in the neighboring area of the park Ľahanovce, publishing an article about the ongoing activities in City District Newspaper and informing citizens about the progress of the project, promoting the regional meeting on Košice web site and City District web site, direct communication with stakeholders. Active involvement of stakeholders and citizens in the phase of park creation and design is really important. Feedbacks from parks users are still ongoing by performing the questionnaire and the interactive leaflet, which allows citizens directly enter into designing of the park.

- *Active involvement through feedback – a questionnaire* -feedback from users is mainly collected by surveys, public opinion polls, questionnaires, interviews, public meetings and hearings. During the project implementation, within ongoing activities in the pilot areas and receiving feedbacks on key project documents, there is a close cooperation and communication with key local stakeholders - Municipal Forest Enterprise and NGO Sosna. Within the promotion of the project, there is communication with organizations at regional level - Košice Self-governing Region, Regional Environmental Office and Regional Building Office. The questionnaire on public opinion and view on pilot areas – park Bankov and park Ľahanovce was elaborated,

- *Monitoring activities* - In order to improve service quality and ensure balanced use of the park area, it is essential to monitor visitors on a continuous basis. In park Bankov and park Ťahanovce, structured monitoring on 17 monitoring spots, that shows numbers of visitors, periods of use most frequent activity and most used park areas has been undertaken. This monitoring was done in close cooperation with our stakeholder NGO Sosna.

Infrastructure / Accessibility

- *Providing infrastructure within the park* – park Ťahanovce represents a forestry area with the lack of tourist infrastructure and services for visitors. Within the project implementation, our aim is to improve a short-term recreation for public by creation resting places with benches, cycle paths and trails. Within the questionnaire there were several questions concerning park infrastructure and accessibility (e.g. What activities do you practice when you visit the park? If you could suggest a new activity in the park, what would it be? Do you think the park is easy to reach? How do you come to the park?) Other important element to encourage visitor accessibility within the park is visitor centres. In many cases these centres constitute not only an information point, but also a fundamental tool to help raise awareness and promote natural values as well as cultural values. Creation of a visitor centre is one of the planned activities of Municipal Forest Enterprise.

3. Obstacles

*How where the **mentioned Methodologies used in** order to face the Weaknesses and Obstacles described under section 3.2.b addressed by the mentioned methodologies selected?*

- **lack of promotion, insufficient level of advertising the park and its potential at all levels, lack of awareness of public administrations concerning the importance and role of periurban park areas** – the City of Košice applies tools such as spreading information through our city web site, preparing an interactive leaflet, publishing articles about the ongoing activities in City District Newspaper and informing citizens about the progress of the project, promoting the regional meeting on Košice web site and City District web site, direct communication with stakeholders. Organisation of the regional meeting in Košice with project partners, key stakeholders, the Mayer of City District, regional authorities - Košice Self-governing Region, Regional Environmental Office, Regional Construction Administration Office. During this phase of the project, all mentioned stakeholders will participate in commenting of the first draft of the studies, they are constantly informed about the project progress and key documents.
- **the possibility of only a rough estimate of traffic areas of the park (not feasible statistical evaluation), lack of monitoring system** - In park Bankov and park Ťahanovce, on 17 monitoring spots a structured monitoring that shows numbers of visitors, periods of use, most used park areas etc. has been undertaken. This monitoring was done in close cooperation with our stakeholder NGO Sosna. Results from this monitoring were used as a support document for elaboration of two studies of further development. In the case of the park Bankov, data on the capacity limits that will be the basis for a new zoning were obtained. In the case of Ťahanovce, this monitoring helped to obtain information if there is interest to create a new park, to obtain a report of the current use of the area.

- **no updated long term general plan for development of park areas** - this issue is described in detail in Action Plan, in activities Developing a long term plan – General Plan of Košice Forest Park. Following the approved Master plan and legislative recognition of Košiceperiurban forest park, there is a proposal to develop a long term plan - General Plan of Košice Forest Park valid for period of 10 years as a tool to define the principles of sustainable forest management in line with the development of public welfare functions of the park areas - recreation, health, cultural and educational.
- **frequent acts of vandalism and constant damage to forest park facilities** - based on the experience of the partners, in the questionnaire we addressed this issue and we tried to find out the most appropriate form of protection and safety. During the project implementation, cleaning of the most used recreational part in pilot area was undertaken in spring and autumn by citizens with Municipal Forest Enterprise and City Districts.
- **lack of infrastructure, poorly constructed network of paths, in poor technical condition in some parts of the park** - Municipal Forest Enterprise and City Districts has been working on a cycle route Krásna –Ťahanovce and on a new educational trail (fauna, flora, geology) for pupils of Ťahanovce Primary School and citizens of Ťahanovce City District. Two resting facilities with benches and fireplace have been created in pilot area Ťahanovce park. One of the planned activities of Municipal Forest Enterprise in Action Plan is to build a visitor centre – information forest park centre to improve promotion and awareness of visitors about periurban park.
- **inadequate participation of stakeholders, especially in public administration, insufficient level of mutual communication of identified stakeholders** – during the project implementation, there was an active collaboration between the identified stakeholders, who were informed about the progress of the project and the main documents during regional meeting, by mail, through website of the city. There was a close cooperation in processing documents and stakeholders contributed with their comments and everyone from his/her professional perspective has contributed to common work.
- **lack of municipal funds for construction and maintenance of the park** – this issue is described in detail in Action Plan, where with Municipal Forest Enterprise, who is a manager of the periurban forest park, has proposed several activities with suggested funding.
- **lack of communication with stakeholders, there is no relevant plan for public participation or plan for communication with stakeholders** – in the Action Plan, there is a detailed description of how to create a cluster of stakeholders with defined rules of operation. One of the objectives of the cluster in the future will be to continue in joint planning and coordination of activities within the periurban park.

4. Actions

Please provide a description to what degree the Actions selected under Part 4 of your Work Plan were appropriately designed and duly carried out in order to implement the Methodologies selected as well as to face the Weaknesses / Obstacles mentioned above.

- A questionnaire on public opinion and view on pilot areas was elaborated. Communication with peer review group by mail, sharing experiences with a questionnaire on public opinion was undertaken. The questionnaire on public opinion was available on web page of City of

Košice. Remarks to the questionnaires on the pilot areas - park Bankov and Park Ťahanovce were prepared by the City of Košice and all already mentioned stakeholders. Finally the questionnaire on public opinion was evaluated and used as a support document for elaboration of two studies of further development - park Bankov and park Ťahanovce.

- An interactive leaflet for park Ťahanovce - a first draft of interactive leaflet was elaboration, key stakeholders commented it. The leaflet directly involved citizens in the creation of the park proposals and proposal of activities and things which they would like to have in the park Ťahanovce. Improving a short-term recreation for public in this part of the pilot area can only be done with close cooperation and communication with the Mayors of the City Districts and local groups (of cyclists, hikers, runners) and citizens. Also results from this interactive leaflet were used as a support document for elaboration of a study of further development for park Ťahanovce.
- Monitoring activities - a proposal of the monitoring system for park Bankov and Ťahanovce was elaborated, later commented and agreed. In order to improve service quality and ensure balanced use of the park area, it is essential to monitor visitors on a continuous basis. In park Bankov and park Ťahanovce, a structured monitoring that shows numbers of visitors, periods of use and most used park areas have been undertaken on 17 monitoring spots. This monitoring was done in close cooperation with our stakeholder NGO Sosna.
- Promoting of periurban park - organisation of the regional meeting in Košice with project partners, (e.g. from "Silesia" Metropolis), key stakeholders, the Mayer of City District, regional authorities. Participation of Slovak stakeholder (Municipal Forest Enterprise) in the International Conference "City Green Areas – Katowice 2012" with presentation of Košice pilot areas.
- Two studies of further development of the park Bankov and park Ťahanovce - preparation of materials for tender - two studies on further development of the pilot areas (Park Bankov, park Ťahanovce).
- Improving conditions for recreations – The following was done with close cooperation with the key stakeholder Municipal Forest Enterprise in the pilot areas: cleaning the most used recreational part in pilot area by citizens with Municipal Forest Enterprise and City Districts. Municipal Forest Enterprise and City Districts have been working on a cycle route Krásna – Ťahanovce and on a new educational trail (fauna, flora, geology) for pupils of Ťahanovce Primary School and citizens of Ťahanovce City District. In pilot area Ťahanovce park two resting facilities with benches and fireplace have been created.

How has it been secured that the various project activities are in line with the project scope and the methodologies selected?

Thanks to regular meetings of Košice Periurban project staff with the key stakeholders, communication and exchange of information, together with advices obtained from peer partners, secured that activities were in line with project objectives.

5. Stakeholders

In what function have the stakeholders (chapter 2.2 of Work Plan) been involved into the actions (actively/passively) and what has been their qualitative contribution?

As it is shown in previous parts, the role of the stakeholders was very active. They actively cooperated during the project implementation and within the activities in the pilot areas. They helped to identify weakness and pointed out on good practices. There was a very close cooperation and intensive communication, especially with Municipal Forest Enterprise as a manager of the pilot area, who gave all necessary information. Our stakeholders offered their expertise, suggested new forms, offered their experience of working with people – NGO Sosna.

What did the stakeholders qualitatively achieve through their participation at the project activities?

NGO Sosna has brought their experience in working with people, volunteers, monitoring, experience with community work, new forms of education, ecological and sustainable approach. Municipal Forest Enterprise brought a detailed insight into the management of the forest in subtle ways, with preserving biodiversity, protected areas and the parallel development of recreational functions. Common communication and cooperation of various stakeholders brought qualitative enrichment of their professional work through mutual cooperation. During the project it was often necessary to reconcile different views and professional outcomes and focus them on achieving a common goal.

Please specify which kind of knowledge has been transferred between project partners and stakeholders and what was the result of this:

Project partner Seine-Saint Denis inspired us with their sophisticated way how to communicate on different levels and with different stakeholders and reach a consensus. They inspired our stakeholders to create a cluster as a platform for discussion and common work of stakeholders in future, what is detailed described in the Action Plan. Project partner North Lombardy showed us that with just minimum of three professionals is it possible to put together a large group of volunteers that can be inspired and is willing to assist in providing the necessary work in the park - particularly cleaning and protection. Similar activity took place in spring 2012 and together with the city district and stakeholders in the summer 2012.

6. Peer Reviews

To what degree and in what fields did the peer review partners upgrade the overall planning process? What was their input used in the component 4 activities of the pilot partner?

The experience of the peer partners about these matters were acquired and discussed during the project meetings, by mail communication, during regional meetings.

- visitor monitoring (Aberdeen City Council, Lille Metropole)
- experiences in identifying public opinion through a questionnaire (Aberdeen City Council, Seine-Saint Denis)
- volunteering in restoration and maintaining of the park (Aberdeen City Council)
- management of the park (Metropolitan Association of Upper Silesia, Seine-Saint Denis)
- awareness raising, promoting interest of the park, participation of citizens (Region of Lombardy, Seine-Saint Denis)

7. Results expected - Indicators

How can these results be quantitatively and qualitatively specified?

In the short term, as direct results of the Periurban project we can identify the following results:

- Awareness raising, promoting spread of information about a new proposed park Ťahanovce also through an interactive leaflet
- Involvement of stakeholders, citizens, businesses, community in restoration and maintaining parts of the park Ťahanovce and park Bankov
- The questionnaire for inhabitants to specify their ideas, needs and requirements on further development of the park – for both pilot areas (park Bankov and park Ťahanovce)
- Monitoring of visitors - in both pilot areas (park Bankov and park Ťahanovce)
- The study of further development of the area which will take into account results from a questionnaire survey - for both pilot areas (park Bankov and park Ťahanovce)

Please, define progress indicators for this scope (except quantitative numbers of products):

At this stage, we can define a list of indicators to be applied during the project implementation:

- interactive leaflet - number of interactive leaflets distributed: 300 copies in the three city districts
- questionnaire - number of people involved in the survey: 277
- development study of the pilot area - number of the study: 2 (park Bankov, park Ťahanovce)
- preliminary spring monitoring
 - the total number of monitoring sites: 3
 - the total number of monitoring hours : 90
 - the total number of monitored people: 1166 people
- overall monitoring summer – autumn
 - the total number of monitoring sites: 17
 - the total number of monitored weekend days : 34
 - the total number of monitored week days: 34
 - the total number of monitoring hours : 816

Part 3: Conclusions

8. Results achieved

What results have been achieved through the implementation of the aforementioned actions? Please, quantify and qualify according to the aforementioned indicators:

The results expected (questionnaire, leaflet, monitoring, development study), which are described in point 7 above have been achieved during project implementation. The elaboration of development studies for both pilot areas - park Bankov and park Ťahanovce with close collaboration and participation of stakeholders is still ongoing.

Which of the aforementioned actions and results were presented at the project meeting in Brussels?

The start up phase of contracting for elaboration of development studies and preparatory works for questionnaire and monitoring was presented at the project meeting in Brussels.

Which of these actions and results were presented at the project meeting in Kosiče?

At the project meeting in Košice, activities concerning questionnaire were presented and debated with peer partners, especially lessons learned from the partner Seine-Saint Denis – what to ask, how to formulate questions, where to use a questionnaire. The state of activities progress: preliminary monitoring of the area has finished, questionnaire ongoing, preparing of overall monitoring were also presented. A proposal of an interactive leaflet, which contains general information about the project, information about the pilot areas, information for inhabitants (web links, activities) with a map of the target areas (pilot areas) and wider relations of the area was presented and discussed with the peer partners.

Which of these actions and results were presented at the project meeting in Lille?

At the project meeting in Lille, results of preliminary monitoring of the area, partners were informed about ongoing activities and the state of their progress – evaluation of the questionnaire on public opinion, preparing an overall monitoring system, finalization and test phase of an interactive leaflet were presented.

9. Methodologies

To what degree are the Methodologies selected put in practice (Please, provide quantitative and qualitative specification)?

Management/relation to surrounding area

- A study on further development of the pilot areas (Park Bankov, park Ťahanovce) will be one of the most important outputs of the Periurban project for the City of Košice.
- Joint involvement of institutional stakeholders and actors - management of periurban forest park Košice directly involves the local authorities at the municipal level and manager of periurban forest park – Municipal Forest Enterprise. Thanks to the project and its activities, there is an intention to create a cluster as a platform for discussion and common work of stakeholders in future management of the park, what is detailed described in the Action Plan.

Policy/regulatory aspects

- The periurban park as a recognised tool in regional law - In our condition this can be obtained by elaboration of pilot area studies, which we are preparing within activities in the pilot areas. These two studies will later become the basis for incorporation into the new upcoming The Master plan Košice (included binding regulations of the layout areas) and this will lead to defining and approving of Statute of Periurban Forest Park Košice.
- Later on beyond the life of the project, elaboration of a General greenery of the periurban forest park is one of the main activities in proposed Action Plan.
- Zoning of the park will be a part of the study for the part Bankov, where will be a proposal of a new zoning of this pilot area.

Social and Communication Aspects

- Promotion of the park through our city web site, preparing an interactive leaflet of a new spatial composition for residents in the neighboring area of the park Ťahanovce.
- Active involvement through feedback – a questionnaire. During the project implementation, the questionnaire on public opinion and view on pilot areas – park Bankov and park Ťahanovce was elaborated.
- Monitoring activities took place in park Bankov and park Ťahanovce. Structured monitoring that shows numbers of visitors, periods of use most frequent activity and most used park areas has been undertaken on 17 monitoring spots. This monitoring was done in close cooperation with our stakeholder, NGO Sosna.

Infrastructure / Accessibility

- Providing infrastructure within the park – within the project implementation were created two resting places with benches, a cycle path and educational trail in the pilot area Ťahanovce pilot areas in close cooperation with Municipal Forest Enterprise.
- Creation of a visitor centre or information centre in park Bankov is one of the planned activities detailed described in a proposed Action Plan.

Which conclusions have to be drawn by comparing the actions carried out with the project's objectives, the Common Methodology (Toolkit) and the Good Practices developed?

Did the contribution of peer review groups or stakeholders lead to concrete policy modifications, concrete actions and the usage of specific funding sources? If yes, please describe them.

During project implementation, projects partners shared their experiences in many aspects that are defined in Common Methodology, where a lot of good practices, which can be adapted to address specific problems and challenges, are identified. Therefore, Common Methodology represents a useful guide for creation, management and maintenance of periurban park.

The influence of peer partners' advices and their experiences can be seen in activities, which are proposed beyond the duration of the periurban project, in proposed Action Plan, where there is an intention to create a cluster or an association in the form of public-private partnership led by Municipal Forest Enterprise respectively the City of Košice, following some positive experiences of partner regions (e.g. Lille, Aberdeen). It would be a significant benefit in terms of making the right decisions and actions in the process of creating and managing the park. The structure of the Association should be simple, administered by selected employees of Municipal Forest Enterprise Košice as territory manager and should coordinate various regional organisations.



Based on the aforementioned conclusions, in what points could the Toolkit (Common Methodology) be improved? Please formulate concrete text passages which could be directly included into the Toolkit document:

Please provide at least one concrete example which testifies the feasibility of the selected methodologies, the potential obstacles and how to overcome them, also including the estimated costs:

As it was mentioned in point 9 Methodologies, thanks to close cooperation and constant communication with project key stakeholders – Municipal Forest Enterprise and Ngo Sosna, we were able to face identified weaknesses and obstacles with aforementioned implemented Methodologies - Management aspect, Policy/regulatory aspects, Social and Communication Aspects, Infrastructure/Accessibility. Thanks to actions carried out (detailed described in point 4 Actions), which were proposed in the Work Plan, concrete results have been achieved. Thanks to the project and its activities, there is an intention to create a cluster/ an association as a platform for discussion and common work of stakeholders in future management of the park, what is detailed described in the Action Plan.

10. Future Collaboration

Please, identify areas of potential future collaboration. Please, describe models for bilateral or multilateral cooperation and describe the entities from outside the project who have been constantly involved in project activities or who should be involved in the future and why:

At national and regional level there is a list of identified potential future collaboration:

- Agency for the Support of Regional Development Košice – consulting and advice with grant schemes, preparation of projects, monitoring of resources
- City of Košice - coordination of land use planning procedure, coordination of development plans and the possibilities of obtaining funds from the city budget as well as non-recurring funding sources
- Municipal Forest Enterprise – coordination and preparation of General greenery of the periurban forest park and management of a periurban forest park cluster
- Three City Districts - Košice-Sever, Ťahanovce, SídliiskoDargovskýchhrdinov - coordination of development plans for city districts and possibilities of obtaining funds from the city districts budget as well as non-recurring funding sources
- Slovak Environmental Agency - advice on environmental issues and conservation
- National Forest Centre - advising on the preparation of the General greenery of the periurban forest park and environmental education programs
- NGOs and interest groups in the field of sports, culture, education and the environment - Inter-institutional cooperation, and coordination of the periurban forest park cluster
- Association of landowners within the park - inter-institutional cooperation, agreements and coordination within the periurban forest park cluster
- Private entrepreneurs in tourism - inter-institutional cooperation, agreements and coordination within the periurban forest park cluster